

This copy of the thesis has been supplied on the condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognise that its copyright rests with its author and that no quotation from the thesis and no information derived from it may be published without the author's prior consent.

**STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF DANCE:
A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

by

GÖRAN KRANTZ

A thesis submitted to Plymouth University
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Plymouth Institute of Education

June 2014

Göran Krantz

Students' experiences of dance: A hermeneutic phenomenological study

Abstract

The dominance of instrumentalism and utilitarianism in education today tends to reduce the value of dance. Research on dance in education is very limited. Recent reviews of research on the arts in education propose that research has to move from exploring transfer effects of artistic activity towards exploring the meaningfulness of the arts themselves. New researches as well as new theoretical approaches are thus called for (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). Hence my research question is: what are students' experiences of dance?

Research on experiences in the arts is contested by the problem to verbalise lived experience. Therefore, in the thesis, a new method based on hermeneutic phenomenology (HP) and arts-based research (ABR) is developed. It includes artistic activity in three forms arts: dance, poetry, and visual art. An oral interview built on a circular structure gives the students a variety of opportunities to interpret and verbalise their experiences of dance. Twenty students, 18 years old, who regularly dance in school, participated. Answers were analysed following van Manen's (1990) method of structural analysis of themes, including poetic interpretations.

The findings reveal that dance is experienced as very important for personal exploration and transformation. Experiences of finding 'my home', security, freedom, authenticity, well-being, and happiness are most evident in research

participants. Dance strengthens students' motivation to take on the challenges of life and their ability to concentrate. The experience of dance is described as an extraordinary state of mind. Both participant evaluations and the analysis of results indicate that the method, *phenomenology of artistic practice*, was successful. Thus this thesis contributes to the development of ABR and HP.

A theoretical perspective placing artistic activity at the centre of the creation of knowledge and based on Gadamer's (1993) ideas on *Bildung* is presented. Recent educational discussions (Biesta, 2012) highlight the importance of interpretative activities and understanding of self in setting future directions for education. This thesis discusses dance in relation to this context and indicates that dance is an important school subject, being based on existential values. In concluding that dance has a positive influence on the life of the students and provides a unique opportunity to explore self, this thesis argues that educationalists should reconsider the value of dance in schools.

List of Contents

Abstract.....	3
List of Contents.....	5
Acknowledgements.....	9
Author's Declaration.....	10
Chapter 1 – Introduction.....	11
My Position.....	13
Information on Context and Identification of Gaps in the Research on the Arts in Education.....	15
Overview of the Thesis.....	18
Chapter 2 - Research Context. Literature Review.....	31
Introduction.....	31
Perspectives on Relevance of the Arts in Education.....	33
Research on the Arts in Education.....	42
Transfer of Knowledge and Different Ways of Knowing.....	47
Arts-Based Research.....	55
Embodiment, Dance and Education.....	61
Research on Dance in Education.....	66
Chapter 3 - Theoretical Perspectives on <i>Bildung</i> , the Arts and Practice.....	73
Perspectives on <i>Bildung</i>	73
Recent Perspectives on <i>Bildung</i>	78
Artistic Activity as a Process of <i>Bildung</i>	87
Chapter 4 - Methodology.....	90
Philosophical and Ontological Background.....	90
The Activities in the Arts as Ontological Basis.....	97
Critique and a Move Forward.....	99
The Development of the Method.....	100
<i>Background</i>	101
<i>Method</i>	109
<i>Context of Method</i>	114
Procedures.....	116
<i>Target Group, Age</i>	116
<i>Schools</i>	116
<i>Process of Selection</i>	118

<i>Participants</i>	118
<i>Place for Interview</i>	119
<i>Introduction and Ethical Protocol</i>	119
Questions.....	121
Comments to the Procedure.....	122
Comments to Ethical Perspectives.....	125
Reflection on Process and Quality of the Study.....	126
<i>Process</i>	126
<i>Bias</i>	128
<i>Relations</i>	131
<i>Relations between Researcher - Research</i>	131
<i>The Student's Relation to Research</i>	132
<i>Relations between Student - Research</i>	133
<i>Validity and Reliability</i>	135
<i>Transparency of Process - Authenticity</i>	136
<i>Interpretation - Truthfulness</i>	137
<i>Limitations</i>	137
Chapter 5 - Findings.....	140
Introduction.....	140
The Experience of Dance.....	145
<i>Cluster of Voices</i>	145
<i>Presentation of Themes</i>	146
<i>Summary and Discussion of Themes</i>	152
<i>Poetic Interpretation</i>	153
The Importance of the Experience of Dance for Life.....	156
<i>Cluster of voices</i>	157
<i>Presentation of Themes</i>	158
<i>Summary and Discussion of Themes</i>	162
<i>Poetic Interpretation</i>	166
Evaluation of the Method.....	167
<i>Presentation of Themes</i>	167
<i>Summary and Discussion of Themes</i>	170
Answers to the Question: What was the most important moment?.....	171
Answers to the Question: What does the picture/poem express?.....	173
Answers to the Last question.....	177

How to Learn about Oneself—Another Way of Learning.....	178
The Importance of the Process.....	179
<i>J's Description</i>	182
<i>F's Description</i>	184
<i>N's Description</i>	186
Findings Presented in Dialogue with Perspectives on <i>Bildung</i>	189
Chapter 6 - Discussion of Findings.....	197
Method.....	197
Introduction.....	197
Evaluation of Method.....	198
<i>Importance for the Students</i>	200
<i>Existential Self-Understanding in the Interpretation of Activities</i> <i>in the Arts; a Method Exploring Uniqueness</i>	203
<i>Process-Based Views on the Method</i>	206
<i>The Contribution of the Different Arts</i>	209
<i>The Nature of the Method</i>	211
Findings.....	215
<i>Important Themes</i>	215
<i>Dance Elicits Positive Experiences</i>	219
<i>Transformation: Nature of the Experience</i>	224
<i>Different Ways of Knowing</i>	230
<i>Motivation</i>	233
<i>Physical Movement and Interpretative Movement</i>	234
<i>To Be in the Dance: Findings Discussed in Contemporary,</i> <i>Educational Perspectives</i>	236
Chapter 7 - Conclusion.....	242
Theoretical Perspectives on the Arts in the Context of <i>Bildung</i>	242
The Method's Contribution to Knowledge.....	249
The Findings' Contribution to Knowledge.....	255
Recommendations for the Future.....	260
Concluding Comments.....	263
Appendices.....	265
Appendix 1 A Letter Seeking Involvement from Schools: Information Sheet and Consent Form	265
Appendix 1 B Participant's Information Sheet and Consent Forms.....	268

Appendix 2 Description of the Dance: Student F.....	272
Appendix 3 A Picture-Student J.....	274
Appendix 3 B Picture-Student F.....	275
Appendix 3 C Picture-Student N.....	276
References	277

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank all the students that participated. Their engagement and interest in doing the interview provided rich material for analysis as well as inspiration for my work on the thesis.

I would like to thank my supervisors Dr. Peter Kelly and Dr. Norman Gabriel for their encouraging and creative support.


Finally, I want to thank my wife, Charlotte, for her support, patience and refreshing comments.

Author's Declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other university award without prior agreement with the Graduate Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the Plymouth University has not formed part of any other degree either at Plymouth University or other institutions.

Word count of main thesis: 78.272

Signed.....
Date.....19 June 2014

Chapter 1 - Introduction

My main research question is: what are students' experiences of dance?

Connected to this main question are the following questions:

- (1) What value do different theoretical and educational perspectives attribute to dance?
- (2) How can students be supported in verbalising their experiences of dance?
- (3) What is the educational significance of students' experiences of dance for themselves, teachers and the wider society?

The instrumental and utilitarian aims of education that are predominant today tend to reduce the importance of the arts (Ravitch, 2010a). Recent reviews of existing research on the importance of the arts in education call for much more research to be done. Existing research on the arts in education occupy only a tiny share of educational research as a whole, and the need for developing new theoretical approaches placing the arts in education more centrally are highlighted (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). Dance is the lowest-ranked subject in school, indeed, lower than the other arts (Robinson, 2011). The recent instrumental changes in the American school system resulted in a major decrease in the amount of dance subjects offered in schools (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). However, voices argue that dance offers a unique form of knowledge different from rational thinking (Stinson, 2004). The importance of meaningful body movements in the development of human consciousness is discussed in recent contexts (Gallagher, 2005; Johnson, 2007; Shusterman, 2008). These holistic views of embodied experience and the interconnectedness of mind and body give dance a new position (Leavy, 2009); however, there is a reported lack of research on dance generally and on dance

in education specifically (Bagley and Castro-Salazar, 2012). Thus, robust arguments for the inclusion of dance in education are few. Researchers in dance and education (Engel and Schou Jeppesen, 2010; Nordaker, 2009) argue that a major reason for the difficulty to develop reliable arguments on the value of dance is the problem of verbalising experiences of dance. This is also a problem in research on the experience of other arts (Eisner, 2002; Gabrielsson, 2011). This reveals the need to explore the value of dance in education, the need to develop new methods that can enhance students' abilities to interpret their experience of dance using verbal language, and the need to develop new theoretical approaches in this area.

The gaps in knowledge that the thesis address are:

1. The lack of studies done on the value of dance in education.
2. The need to develop new methods to attain verbalised meanings of the experience of dance and to enhance the process of verbalization.
3. The lack of theoretical perspectives to underpin the importance of the arts in a non-instrumental educational context.

The aims of the thesis are to develop a method which provides rich verbalised material on what students experience when dancing, to expand knowledge on why dance is important to students, and to discuss a theoretical context that can include experiences in dance.

My Position

I have worked with dance in the form of eurythmy for many years. I finished my eurythmy training in 1979, and since then, I have been active in teaching and performing eurythmy. (In the thesis I mostly use the general concept dance. It includes different forms of expressive movements, such as eurythmy). In the teaching practice, I have experienced that, when dancing, students can have strong experiences of high personal importance, experiences that transcend everyday experiences. In my artistic work, I have experienced situations that opened new perspectives about myself and my relation to the world. Because of that, I developed an interest in phenomenological perspectives. During my study, Goethe and his phenomenological approach to knowledge influenced me. My interest was later drawn towards music and movement, and I did phenomenological studies exploring the experience of the melodic intervals (Krantz, 2002, 2007; Krantz, Merker and Madison, 2003) and a quantitative study exploring psychophysical reactions to melodic intervals (Krantz *et al.*, 2011). In the phenomenological studies, I asked participants what they experienced when hearing a specific melodic interval and to capture the experience in a written language or in a movement. In my artistic and teaching practice, I have experienced integrating different art forms as most helpful in widening the experience of a specific quality. The principle of eurythmy is to integrate music and language with movement (Steiner, 1984, 1996). It rests on multimodal activities and integrates different arts.

With these experiences in the background, my first ideas for the method in the thesis were to start with a dance then have some kind of a multimodal task to widen the experience and write about the impressions. As I describe in Chapter

4, the method I developed was new to me, and my expectation on what it would bring was based on my own ideas and on research in the field. I expected that the findings would consist of a variety of feelings and experiences of self.

On my first reflections on the content of the thesis, I found it important to place the thesis into a broader educational context. My reason for this was that I saw the need to widen perspectives on the arts in education and especially dance in education to be able to develop reliable arguments concerning their contribution to education. In the wider reading of the literature, I searched for contexts that could contribute new perspectives on my field of research including theoretical and philosophical perspectives. My conviction is that the arts are important in the recent educational context because they offer alternative ways of knowing and can explore areas that rational knowledge has no access to. The increasing problem with the mental health of young adults and a school system that focuses on instrumental learning and cognitive results concerns me. Based on my own experiences, I argue that we have to reconsider what is happening in education and develop new ways of learning. We also have to address the socio-cultural situation in schools, and the arts can give specific contribution on this matter. In discussions about these themes, I have experienced that there is a lack of knowledge on what are the contributions of arts so far. Thus, arguments for the importance of arts tend to be weak in stringent discussions. In my work with this thesis, I wanted to question and deepen my understanding of the importance of dance in education, search for new ways of exploring the educational relevance of dance, and to find educational contexts to place dance in. In summary, I presented in this section my background as a researcher and my expectations on taking on this research.

Information on Context and Identification of Gaps in the Research on the Arts in Education

Dance as a subject in school has been dismissed over a longer period (Robinson, 2011). To be able to understand the underlying factors that caused the dismissal of dance in school, a broader context on the importance of the arts in education is discussed in the thesis. Instrumental, rational, and utilitarian reasons dominate the recent educational context (van Manen, 2007). The neoliberal ways of thinking makes it difficult to develop projects that aim to contradict the instrumental paradigm (Thomson, 2005; van Manen, 2007). Instrumental, rational thinking only accepts the arts if they can deliver results that enhance instrumental academic achievement or capacities that are useful, such as innovative and motivational skills (Nussbaum, 2010; Lindgren, 2013). This places the arts in a position where the activities they offer are seen as positive only if their effect can be demonstrated as useful in another area of knowledge (Burnaford *et al.*, 2007) and dismisses the specific knowledge developed in the arts themselves (Robinson, 2011). However, discussions on the aims of education include abilities that open and understand different cultural and social influences. The ability to interpret situations in life is seen as crucial for the individual today (Kemp, 2011). This includes ability to question existing situations, capability to see new perspectives, and formation of genuine opinions (Biesta, 2012; Kemp, 2011; Nussbaum, 2010). These perspectives include discussions on how education can be a preparation for responsible citizens and democratic abilities thus the focus is moved away from instrumental reason towards capacities of the individual (Nussbaum, 2011). The instrumental, technical development of education is seen as problematic because it leads the students away from developing their own judgement of

situations. A humanistic approach in education, including the arts, is seen as needed to develop this capacity and to be able to meet the demands of our time (Nussbaum, 2010, 2011; Ravitch, 2010a).

However, recent examples show that decisions on whether the arts should be a part of education or not do not pay attention to these new ideas. They strongly rely on instrumental and utilitarian reasons. This is exemplified by keeping some arts in Swedish schools after the recent change of curriculum based on the ability of arts to develop creativity and entrepreneurship (Lindgren, 2013). In 2009, the Swedish government proposed that the main aim of research in education is to develop an evidence-based school (Regeringens proposition, 2009). This direction of research is not fully accepted by practitioners and is not in agreement with their everyday educational work thus the change in the direction of research is discussed (Levinsson, 2013). Researches on the arts in education mainly focused on transfer effects of artistic activities (Winner and Cooper, 2000). This kind of research has raised major arguments to include arts in education. However, this argument for the arts has been questioned recently. An overview of research aimed at exploring the causal effect between the arts and academic, social, and innovative capacities is found in the report *Art for Art's Sake?* by Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) and published by OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The conclusion of the report is that there are no stable arguments that support the idea that the arts enhance these capabilities. Thus, it is not possible to state that the arts can improve learning in other domains. The well-known arguments based on transfer effects of the arts in education thus become weak. The report concludes that the arts might influence capacities on different areas of life, but

the arts mainly develop a knowledge within the own activity, create habits of mind, and are important for well-being, personal development, and good life (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). This places research on the arts in education in a new situation. If the contributions of the arts deal with other ways of knowing, personal development, habits of mind, and good life (Koopman, 2005; Lindgren, 2013; Varkøy, 2012; Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013), how can we get informed knowledge on these issues? Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) call for much more research on the arts in education and especially on this new perspective. They also call for a new theory that can encompass new non-instrumental perspectives on the arts in education today. They argue that art is for art's sake, and we need to explore the importance of the activity in the arts.

From an educational perspective Caterall (2009, p.31) argues that future research must focus on 'phenomenological studies that probe the meanings of art experiences'. From a health care perspective on education Theorell (in SFI, 2005) specifies the need to do more research on the actual experience of doing art. These perspectives point out that the next step in the exploration of the importance of the arts in education is to do phenomenological studies on the experience of being *in* the artistic activity. What meanings are created? Are they important for personal development and good life? What ways of knowing are possible in the arts?

The thesis answers the questions posted above by developing a new qualitative research method based on hermeneutic phenomenology that explores meanings created *in* the lived experience of dance. The method includes

different artistic activities and interpretations of the artworks. The capacity of arts to enhance the exploration of experiences is shown in a range of research using arts-based research methods. However, the use of different arts to explore the experience of dance in a comparative setting, as what the thesis does, is new. The method of the thesis is a development of the methods in qualitative research that make a deeper exploration of the experience *in* dance and the exploration of art for art's sake, in the case of dance possible. Findings show that the method was successful, and new knowledge on the importance of dance to personal meaning making and life is developed. Based on a discussion of the findings, a theoretical context that places the findings into a recent interpretation of *Bildung* is developed.

As a result, I have identified key components of the thesis. Contextual information as well as a discussion, within the field of research, of important problems about the importance of the arts in education led to an identification of gaps in knowledge. The aim of the thesis, which is to contribute to knowledge in these areas, has been shown, and a brief description of the method has been provided.

Overview of the Thesis

Using the research questions as point of departure, Chapter 2 provides a review of different positions both on the importance of the arts in education as well as practice-based, qualitative research methods. Chapter 2 gives background to the thesis by showing that this research is important to the recent educational context seen both from methodological and educational perspectives. Because the research questions encompassed a wide area of knowledge, Chapter 2

discusses different relevant perspectives. However, the focus is on the main theme of the thesis, which is to explore the lived experience of being in the artistic activity, in the dance. The chapter starts with a general discussion on the importance of the arts, giving examples on how the dominating instrumental perspective on education place the arts in a position where they are seen as useful only if they can contribute enhancements of academic skills (Caterall, 2009), innovative abilities (Wahlqvist, 2009), and creativity in business (Colby, Ehrlich and Sullivan, 2011). Without such clear evidence for the usefulness of artistic activities, the tendency is to reduce their presence in the curriculum (Lilliedahl in Lindgren, 2013) or to point out both the uselessness and the negative financial effects of the arts to the society (Fölster, Kriechberg and Sahlén, 2011). Discussing the role of art in education, Robinson (2011) concludes that the arts are low ranked. This mirrors negative culturally constructed views on the arts in western societies (Dissanayake, 2000). Extrinsic arguments for or against the arts in education are challenged by authors who claim that the arts are important in critical thinking (Nussbaum, 2010), responsibilities of citizenship (Ravitch, 2010a), engagement in life (Robinson, 2009, 2011), enhancement of social inclusion (Sanderson, 2008), and architecting one's life (Eisner, 2002). Humanistic arguments claiming that the arts develop intrinsic abilities in the human (Scruton, 2007) and claims that the arts enhance academic and other skills (AEP-Arts, 2014) have been questioned.

Schwartz, Bransford and Sears (2004) highlight the problematic aspects of the idea that knowledge can be transferred from one domain to another. This view on knowledge tends to reduce the importance of forms of knowing that have an

authentic relation to the situation experienced (Schwartz, Bransford and Sears, 2004). This put the focus on that knowing in practice, in specific situations (Billet, 2001; van Manen, 2007; Sennet, 2009; Lave, 2011) is an alternative way of knowing. Knowing as a process, learning from experience can expand theoretical knowledge. Biesta (2012) argues that education today should be based on an existential relation to the world. This relation is based on activities, to be in a situation. In the Swedish context, Dahlin (1993) points out the importance of an existential approach to education. This approach is opposed to the instrumental view and is focused on authenticity. This kind of understanding is process-based and appears in situations that suddenly open up new knowledge. Here, the questioning attitude is an important factor, and the ultimate end of education is the experience and exploration of oneself (Dahlin, 1993).

The discussion on different perspectives of knowing leads to a discussion on methods. Bruner (1990) mentions that human meaning is created in actions and is best expressed in narratives. Bruner (1990) thus argues that this kind of knowledge is of totally different nature compared to instrumental knowledge such as information or facts. Knowledge is created in the act of expressing it thus different forms of expression such as narratives, pictures, or dance are of interest in research. Methods that can capture experiences in specific situations and offer alternative ways of representing and interpreting them can be found within the qualitative research paradigm (Knowles and Cole, 2008). Arts-based research (ABR) methods have been useful in deepening experiences and have thus expanded the qualitative research context (Knowles and Cole, 2008). Many ABR studies have been conducted, and the positive contribution that the

activities in the arts have given to research has also been analysed from methodological perspectives (Leavy, 2009). ABR has developed mainly out of social research and has been used as effective tool to deepen the understanding and representation of educational, social, and healthcare issues (Knowles and Cole, 2008). Still in a recent overview of qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011), ABR is not mentioned. This indicates that the arts are seen as useful in their instrumental value but not in their own rights. However, arguments have been raised against this idea. Baldaccino (2009) and Sullivan (2005) point out that ABR aimed at exploring the activities of the arts themselves would be the next step in the development of ABR.

The following section reviews research on embodiment, dance, and education. I point out that recent research has re-evaluated the importance of meaningful body movement for the development of human consciousness. Dance is the most embodied art form where the expression is communicated through the movements of one's body. Dance was regarded both by Aristotle and Plato as important in the educational process (Lazou, 2004). Dissanayake (2000) and Lynn Smith (2003) suggest that dance seen from a historical perspective has been central in earlier cultures and has been placed into existential dimensions. In modern western society and education, dance has been marginalized to high extent (Stinson, 1998; Leavy, 2009). This has led to few research done on dance generally and dance in education specifically (Cann, 2003). Faber and Bonbright (2004) conclude that the studies done are of low quality in terms of aims and method. The overview done by Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) as well as the analysis of dance in education done by Bagely and Castro-Salazar (2012) shows that dance is the art that is far less researched.

However, the studies exploring the lived experience of dance in education give evidence that dance elicits experiences important to children and students. Basic experiences reported are feeling free, feeling authentic, being who I really am, and transformation (Bond and Stinson, 2000/2001). Frichtel (2012) summarizes the experience of dance in three words: freedom, transformation, and community. Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) point out that experiences in dance seem to be very different from normal life; the experiences are described by children as another place, another time, a spiritual/magic dimension. To find, reveal, and know oneself, as Miller (2010) concludes his research, seem to be at the core of experiences in dance.

This chapter encompasses different perspectives I found relevant for the thesis. The general discussion on the importance of the arts in education and the recent developments towards an understanding of the importance of deepening the experience and understanding of the artistic activity itself give the broad context to the thesis. The discussion on the arts-based methods shows the same trend as the general context: the move from searching for transfer effects of instrumental nature to a focus on how the arts themselves can develop experience and understanding of the human condition. Research on dance in education is reviewed.

In Chapter 3, a theoretical framework is discussed. The chapter uses as its point of departure the short discussion of the historical context of *Bildung*. The main part of this section is a review of Gadamer's position on *Bildung*. Gadamer (1993) rejects both a rationalistic as well as subjectivist perspective on education and expands the idealistic aesthetic position. He places knowledge

into a phenomenological context rooted in the encounter with the world and the possibility exploring the lived experience. Gadamer (1993) points out that knowledge is dialogical in nature and that meaning is created in an interpretative process where language is an important part of understanding. Education for Gadamer (2001) thus is rooted in one's activities, and he argues that education is self-education. I see these ideas as most relevant in the current discussion on how to overcome arguments on educational beliefs based on rationalism and utility.

In the following section, perspectives on the recent position on *Bildung* are discussed. Authors coming from different perspectives (Biesta, 2002; Masschelein and Ricken, 2003; Ruin, 2011) argue that we should leave the humanistic concept of *Bildung* behind. However, they also argue that it is possible to develop a new perspective on *Bildung* by focusing on the basic activity behind the concept, the interpretation of something factual, something experienced. Here, the arts are important because their activities both create and explore thus examining the process of interpretation (Eisner, 2002; Sjöholm, 2010). Kemp (2011) considers the ability to interpret situations in life as crucial in contemporary society. Wimmer (2003) claims that the ability to be in interpretative encounter with experiences in time is a way to expand the concept of *Bildung*. Wimmer (2003) and Kemp (2011) both see hermeneutic phenomenology as a way to develop the needed interpretative knowledge. A review of Gadamer's philosophical discussion of the ontology of hermeneutic phenomenology (HP) closes this section. Gadamer (1993) gives the activity in the arts a prominent role in this discussion.

Chapter 4 discusses the ontological background of the methodological context in HP. This is followed by a description of considerations and practical steps taken to develop the research method: description of the method and procedures. A discussion on the validity and reliability of the research closes the chapter.

The ontological basis of HP is expressed by Heidegger (2010), when he argues that to exist is based on the concept of to be in the world, to be in time. Modes or ways of being are the basic element of existence, and these are connected to ways of understanding being. Heidegger (2010) places the searching, the interpretative activity, and the questioning of being at the centre of being. A phenomenon is something that appears to us, and in this appearance, there is something that shows itself in the situation. The truth in this situation reveals itself in the interpretative process. Heidegger (2010) argues that the arts, especially poetry, have a specific potential of revealing truth. Gadamer (1993) develops these thoughts and rejects rationalist, subjectivist, and idealist concepts of truth. He argues that truth is to be found in the lived experience. In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer (1993) establishes the ontology of HP in the chapter *The Ontology of the Work of Art and Its Hermeneutic Significance*. He uses a description of drama as an example on how truth is revealed. Here, the close relation between the arts and the ontological underpinnings to HP is evident. A critique on Gadamer's philosophical position is provided.

In next section of Chapter 4, I review the process of developing the method. The research question is to explore the lived experiences of dance. This includes the second research question: How can a method be developed that

improve the student's ability to express the experience in words? In reading about experience and how language can capture experience, I was inspired by Dewey, Merleau-Ponty and Vygotsky. In their work I identified important aspects on how to approach lived experience later used in the method. The method starts with asking the students to express the importance of dance using dance, picture, and poem. The oral interview that follows explores the experience of being in these artistic activities and whether the experience is important in life. Questions evaluating the process and the contribution of the poem and picture in understanding the experience constitute the second part of the interview. Procedures and ethical perspectives are described in detail. A reflection on the process and quality of the research highlights the importance of the relational aspects.

In Chapter 5, the findings are presented in a form of collected statements, and important themes found in the analysis are identified. Following van Manen's (1990) ideas on the value of poetic interpretations the findings are also presented in two poems. The four main themes developed based on the question about the students' experiences doing the dance proves that they experience security, freedom, well-being, and completeness. Students claim that they develop as persons and get new perspectives on life. They experience strong feelings, and the findings establish that the experience of dance is dynamic and built on opposites. The findings substantiate that the main theme is the exploration of self. The answers to the question on the importance of the experience of dance to life show that dance creates a secure centre, 'a home' that makes the students feel secure in difficult situations in life. Dance makes them calm and less strained. They experience that they develop themselves

and solve problems and questions in real life. Dance strengthens their concentration, endurance, and motivation to do things in life.

The students evaluate the process of the interview as positive. The method makes the experience much clearer and gives a deepened understanding of the experience. The use of different types of expression is experienced to enhance the ability to explore and express the experience. The process makes them better understand why dance is important and meaningful to them and why dance is important in a wider context. The evaluation confirms that the method was successful. Statements on what the different arts expressed show that their contribution to the understanding of the experience differs. The picture is argued to express feelings while the poem explain and clarify what is experienced.

Examples on the individual process of creating understanding are included. These examples give another perspective on the findings other than the themes and show that the interpretations of the picture and the poem are important for the understanding of the experience. It is important that the students develop a context of experiences to relate to and use when exploring self.

In the last part of Chapter 5, a dialogue between the findings and perspectives drawn from the context of *Bildung* is presented. I argue that this dialogue gives a widened understanding of the findings. It also reveals correspondences between the findings and Gadamer's thoughts and creates a link to Chapters 3 and 7.

In Chapter 6, a discussion of findings is presented in two parts: first, a discussion of findings related to the method and second, a discussion of findings related to the experience of dance.

The method is close to the aim of van Manen's (2007) *phenomenology of practice* therefore I called it *phenomenology of artistic practice*. The findings show that the interpretations of the artwork is important and that the method makes it possible to not only express the experience in verbalised form but to also compare experiences from different artistic expressions thus creating a meaningful context around the experience. Through this comparative activity, the students establish a dialogue within themselves in which they identify important aspects relating to these experiences. This activity makes them aware of what happens to them in the process of interpretation. The *phenomenology of artistic practice* thus expands the possibilities to explore lived experience. Students claim that doing the interview was meaningful for them on different levels; the interview helps them understand the importance of dance in their lives as well as in society. Thus, some students believe that it would be an important part of education to explore one's relation to dance in the way the method affords. A discussion on the consideration that the students are in the phase of creating their own identity follows. Marcia's (1980) ideas on how identity is developed are related to the findings. The main question is how to arrive at informed judgements about one's self; the findings indicate that the method was helpful in this respect. A definition of the process the students experienced: *existential self-understanding in the interpretation of activity in the arts* is provided.

A discussion of the nature of the knowledge developed using the method highlights that this kind of knowledge is developed using a process. It is argued that the process can be seen as an apprenticeship in the exploration of self. This process is discussed in relation to van Manen's (1990) definition of phenomenological research as a theory of the unique and Biesta's (2012) arguments that we live in an existential relation to life and that uniqueness is explored in situations when we act. In practice-based research, knowledge is embedded in actions, and an interruption of the normal ways of being is needed to become aware of experiences connected to the action (Küpers, 2011). The method includes moments of interruptions of normal ways of being. The artistic tasks are challenging; instantly interpreting the artwork and the own experience is clearly challenging. I experienced this process in which the students developed understanding as discontinuous and that understanding came suddenly. Therefore, I describe the nature of the method developing the ideas that an HP process can be described as a circle (Gadamer, 1993) or spiral (Ricoeur, 1998). I argue that this image does not capture the whole process and present an alternative description. I did this because I want to put attention to the dialogical nature of the method where the questions are caused by interruptions. The contribution of the different arts to this process is discussed.

A discussion on the findings that confirm and expand the results from earlier research proposing that students in dance explore and transform themselves opens the second part of Chapter 6. The findings provide evidence that the experiences of dance are very positive for the students and to their lives; this is substantiated by the experiences of well-being, freedom, security, happiness, and hope. The reported problems in school concerning low self-esteem and

mental problems as well as the existential dilemma of the individual in relation to the current society are discussed in relation to the findings. Bauman (2006) argues that the recent challenge for the individual is to seek security and freedom. It is discussed how the experiences in dance establish security and freedom. The findings show that students experienced that they changed by being in the dance and that motivation and concentration are strengthened. Earlier research has shown that this is the case, and the thesis adds to it by drawing on examples from individual students. The nature of these experiences, which comprise a very dynamic state of mind that is different from everyday life, is discussed, as well as, the difference between experiences of physical movement and dance. The last part of Chapter 6 discusses findings from the contemporary educational perspectives. Biesta's (2012) argument that education is a meaningful process that rests on interpretation of specific situations in life is related to the findings.

Chapter 7 opens with a theoretical reflection consisting of a new reading of the relation between art and education using Gadamer's concept of *Bildung*. My argument is that a revised reading of the basic activities in Gadamer's concept of *Bildung* can widen the understanding of the findings. Truth is found in the experience of art (Gadamer, 1993). It is not outside the human, and it is not purely subjective. *Bildung* has been seen as a transformation of self through encounter with the world, with 'the other'. It has been seen as a travel out into the world where all encounters give something new. On the basis of the findings, I argue that another view of *Bildung* is as appropriate as the traditional. The students who participated in the thesis said that their main aim is to come

home, to return to oneself. To explore how I am in the world is the basic activity in this view on *Bildung*.

In the following part, the contribution that the method gives to knowledge is summarized. It is argued, and the findings substantiate, that the method was successful based on its evaluation. It is argued that the method contributes to the development of ABR and HP and that the method could be used for educational purposes especially in adolescence when identity is formed. The method thus can be seen as a contribution to an educational form operating in an existential context. It is argued that the method makes it possible to expand a pure conceptual understanding of the lived experience. The findings contribute to a discussion on the role of different arts in an ABR setting. It is argued that the method can be seen as a practical way of exploring Gadamer's ideas of *Bildung* and education as self-education.

The findings contribute to knowledge by confirming and giving a wider understanding of experiences in dance that explore the self and elicit personal transformation and development of motivation. The thesis provides a strong contribution to knowledge that confirms the importance of dance for well-being and a positive relation to life, a good life. It also contributes to the understanding of how dance can develop individual security and freedom. The findings contribute to knowledge of how an existential approach to education, as discussed by Biesta (2012), can be practised in dance. It is repeatedly argued that a re-evaluation of the role of dance in education is needed. The chapter closes with recommendations for the future and concluding comments where I review the process and the moments I found important.

Chapter 2 - Research Context. Literature Review

Introduction

The research questions address two problems: first, the need to expand research on the experience of dancing, and second, to develop a method that enhances the interpretative process of understanding that experience with the aim of arriving at deepened verbalised meanings. The research questions are framed by a general discussion of the importance of the arts in education. The focus is not exclusively on dance because arguments that influence views on dance in school depend on the general direction of educational aims. The literature on the importance of the arts in culture is huge, and the focus is mainly on recent literature discussing the arts in education and related research. Literature discussing different ways of knowing—arts-based research, finally, also literature on dance in education, and research on dance in education—is reviewed. I identify gaps in knowledge that my research aims to address.

A survey exploring the education system in 22 European countries identified similarities and differences among them (Robinson, 2011). One similarity is that ‘the arts are on the edges of the school curriculum’ and that artistic activities found in the formal curriculum of the educational systems mainly are visual arts and music, ‘hardly any provides dance lessons’ (Robinson, 2011, p.60). Accordingly, Robinson (2011) argues that there exists a hierarchy of subjects in educational systems today. This hierarchy is dependent on the instrumental and utility value of subjects. At the top are mathematics, language, and sciences, and at the bottom are the arts. In addition, there is a hierarchy within the arts: ‘art and music usually have a higher status than theatre and dance’ (Robinson,

2011, p.60). Robinson (2011) argues that this hierarchy is easy to see when comparing amount of lessons offered: whether they are optional or compulsory or whether they are included in standardised tests or not. So seen from the perspective of how much time is allocated to the arts and academic position, the arts fail to position themselves at the centre of education. Robinson (2011) calls for viewing educational systems as a whole and that all subjects have their role. Robinson (2011) discusses that dance, although lowest ranked, offers a unique way of building a sense of self, and he gives examples of how students, especially through dance, can make strong personal progress. He uses the terms 'knowing your mind', 'being creative', and 'feeling better' for the contribution the arts can give to the educational system (Robinson, 2011, p.ix). The experience of oneself is emphasised: how to make choices, how to evaluate different situations. The arts give the student an opportunity to find meaningfulness in life, to find the passion and the motivation for life (Robinson, 2009).

One reason for the downplaying of the arts is that our current culture tends to value instrumental utility above other considerations. In educational contexts, this leads to losing sight of meaning when discussing the quality of education (van Manen, 2007). Quality tends to be interpreted in a purely quantitative context where measurable outcomes and standards predominate. Thomson (2005, p.56) argues that:

'our technological understanding of being produces a calculative thinking that quantifies all qualitative relations, reducing entities to bivalent, programmable information.'

Thus, educational aims today must contend with these technocratic presuppositions that form part of the cultural context. To develop perspectives

moving in a qualitative direction that can challenge this tendency to instrumental reduction requires a strong point of departure. Max van Manen articulates this problem:

‘the dominance of technological and calculative thought is so strong that it seems well-nigh impossible to offer acceptable alternatives to the technocratic ideologies and the inherently instrumental presuppositional structures of professional practice’ (2007, p.19).

Unfortunately, this succinct statement would seem to accurately portray the situation of the arts in education today. Their importance is marginal. Their relation to the current dominating instrumental thinking on education must be subjected to scrutiny, and our knowledge on what the arts can contribute to education must be enhanced. Research in this area is limited but is needed in order to identify the role the different arts can play in the educational system today (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013).

In what follows, I will identify perspectives in the current educational discussion that strike me as significant. Their positions will be analysed, and critical reflections on them will be offered.

Perspectives on Relevance of the Arts in Education

The Swedish discussion on the value of the arts in society was strongly intensified due to a study based on a statistical evaluation of the financial benefit different studies have for society. Fölster, Kreichberg and Sahlén (2011) argue that financial support to universities should be grounded on utility needs, efficiency, and financial outcomes of studies. In their report, aimed at politicians, they argue that possibilities to study the arts should be restricted while their data show that these studies lead to low life-long income and low productivity of the individual seen in the perspective of useful contributions to society. The title

of the report, *Konsten att strula till ett liv* [The art of messing up a life], indicates that, in this view, the arts are seen both as useless and as a problem.

Another Swedish report, *Making art work* (Wahlqvist, 2009), based on similar statistic material came to another conclusion. Wahlqvist (2009) is aware of the financial problems for people involved in artistic professions but acknowledge the value of abilities developed in higher artistic trainings. She argues that artistic activity is needed in a creative society and that artists can play a significant role in regional innovative development. The report questions traditional views on the role of art in society. However, there is no critical analysis on the new role artists could have. No research-based arguments on the relationship between innovation in society and arts activities are presented. Colby, Ehrlich and Sullivan (2011) discuss indications that recent business education in USA is too narrow and do not challenge students to question assumptions, develop creative thinking, or understand business in larger contexts. Working with finance today includes being part of complex decisions, and an ability to make ethically grounded judgements is needed. They, therefore, argue that humanities and liberal arts must be included in business education.

These perspectives show that the arts are regarded as a waste of time and money or they are seen as important for the development of creativity in other fields of life. Negative or positive, an instrumental, utilitarian perspective is dominant. Creative industries in music, fashion, and design are strong in Sweden, but still, the value of the arts in education is neglected. In the last Swedish reform of the upper-school curriculum, artistic activities were reduced

because no clear relationship between the aesthetic activities and innovations in market-economic perspective could be identified (Lindgren, 2013). Without this clear relationship to economic and utilitarian values, the arguments for the arts in education are vague and weak (Lindgren, 2013). Oscarson (2013) argues that the arts develop values that are contradictory to utility aims and when creativity is discussed as being part of economic growth, it limits the importance and possibilities of creativity. That these tendencies influence dance in school is convincingly shown in the decrease in the number of schools offering dance in USA after the last instrumental school reform (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). However, Diane Ravitch (2010a) articulates a critique on the current instrumental school system in USA. She was active in reforming the school system but now sees that the reform has failed while instrumental and financial aspects dominate schools, and the tasks of school are not fulfilled. In an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, March 9, 2010, she summarises:

‘Most significantly, we are not producing a generation of students who are more knowledgeable, and better prepared for the responsibilities of citizenship’ (Ravitch, 2010b).

Her conclusion is that a radical change of the system is needed and that the value of the humanities and the arts in school must be acknowledged. From a philosophical perspective, Martha Nussbaum strongly argues for the importance of humanities and the arts on all levels in culture. She warns about a new crisis:

‘...I mean a crisis that goes largely unnoticed, like a cancer; a crises that is likely to be, in the long run, far more damaging to the future of democratic self-government: a world-wide crisis in education. Radical changes are occurring in what democratic societies teach the young, and these changes have not been well thought through. Thirsty for national profit, nations, and their systems of education, are heedlessly discarding skills that are needed to keep democracies alive...What are these radical changes? The humanities and the arts are being cut away, in both primary/secondary and college/university education, in virtually every nation of the world’ (Nussbaum, 2010, p.1-2).

Nussbaum (2010) suggests that education, primarily, is a development of human capabilities such as 'critical thinking', to approach problems as a 'citizen of the world' and 'the ability to imagine sympathetically the predicament of another person' (Nussbaum, 2010, p.7). Her placement of the humanities and the arts at the centre of recent development in society is grounded on a detailed analysis of tendencies in different countries in the world. However, there is no detailed discussion on the specific importance of the arts, and references to existing research on how arts enhance basic democratic abilities are few in her book. These arguments for humanities and the arts in education (Nussbaum, 2010, 2011; Ravitch, 2010a; Robinson, 2009, 2011) focus on the process of education, not only on the outcome and to make it possible for individuals to find and develop, maybe unknown, resources that they have. These perspectives focus on the need to develop educational systems where responsibility, citizenship, and democratic values are core values. They highlight that activities in the arts and humanities develop individual resources, basic functions in a democratic society, and a meaningful learning environment in education. An instrumental, utilitarian approach towards education is seen as a risk for society.

Sanderson (2008) challenges the dominance of extrinsic arguments for art education in schools. The worth of experiences in the creative arts are dismissed and seen 'primarily as a means to other ends' (Sanderson, 2008, p. 483). However, the artistic activity seen in its own right might change the educational value of it. Sanderson argues:

'the absence of a strong representation of the arts in general, and dance in particular within the National Curriculum may be contributing to the social and educational exclusion of some young people' (2008, p.482).

Buckingham and Jones (2001) discuss the value of cultural activity in promoting socially positive outcomes. However, they argue that there is a danger that the arts could be seen as a 'quick-fix' solution that:

'somehow automatically transform education, and bring about broader forms of social and economic regeneration, in and of themselves' (2001, p.13).

Houston (2005) argues against the tendency to make over-enthusiastic claims about the ability of art to transform people's lives. She also questions community arts projects claiming that transformation should always be good for individuals and society. In relation to the specific example of community dance, she notes that a romantic notion of arts as the means to self-discovery can be a danger because it confines the fluidity of art, the transformative dimension of experience, and it may cause other experiences to be overlooked (Houston, 2005). She also warns that participation in community dance may be a road to transformation, 'but that road is far from straight and smooth' (Houston, 2005, p.176). These perspectives highly value the activities in the arts but also warn against over-enthusiastic claims on the importance of the arts. Such claims might restrict the development of the arts themselves and narrow down possible experiences in the arts.

In the humanistic paradigm, the arts were seen as a most important part of culture and a way for the individual to develop humanity and be well educated (Read, 1974). Scruton (2007) argues that it is important to continue this humanistic relation in education where the arts are at the core of the culture and seen as a way to develop the needed non-instrumental values to keep the society human. He argues that we live in a civilization that is destroying culture. Perception and response are tied up in the external world, and instrumental

efficiency and relativism destroy inner values that can carry the judgement. 'Culture issues from judgement' (Scruton, 2007, p.5). He argues that a change in our way of perceiving and 'ways of knowing' is needed (Scruton, 2007, p.68). In existential situations where we need to act, it is important to know what to feel, know what to do, and find the right motivation for doing something. He argues that this cannot be learned in an instrumental way; it is another kind of knowledge. Cultures keep and develop such knowledge, so it is there when we need it. Education is the arena where individuals can develop these abilities. He refers to Schiller's aim for culture:

'the repository of emotional knowledge, through which we can come to understand the meaning of life as an end in itself' (2007, p.41).

Scruton's answer to how this shall be attained is through the aesthetic experience:

'Art, literature, music.... are interesting for their own sakes... They create a frame of reference, which permits us to communicate our states of mind. They offer consolation, amusement, enjoyment and emotional stimulation in thousands of ways. But we do not judge them by measuring the good effects. On the contrary, we judge them on their intrinsic merits' (2007, p. 49).

He makes clear that the importance of the arts is to be found in their intrinsic value resting in the Western culture. However, the Western humanistic paradigm has been deconstructed by postmodern criticism (Løvlie and Standish, 2002) and by postcolonial perspectives that acknowledge the relative value of all cultures (Jonsson, 2010). The situation for an individual today is often described from a world-citizen perspective (Kemp, 2011), in which the task to encounter and judge a variety of cultural perspectives is central. Acknowledging limitations of a particular cultural background is needed in order to be open for other cultural perspectives (Nussbaum, 2011). So the current situation includes tendencies to interpret the value of the arts in education

relying on old humanistic values as well as a critique on that a humanistic approach embody cultural power relations that are outdated (Biesta, 2002). The post-human critique of Nussbaum (2010) argues that she relied on a belief in inherent human moral goodness and trust in reason (Bradiotti, 2013). In the post-human context not only the Western cultural tradition is questioned but also the traditional position of man in the world (Wolfe, 2010). Old traditional humanistic values and a trust in reason are replaced by the awareness that man should not be seen, principally, as the centre of the world but as an entity living in relationship to other living creatures and technical creations. Wolfe (2010) points out that one aspect of this is that the human condition is seen as a living system as described by Varela. Such a system does not rely on essences but on self-organisation where relations and communication between the parts make a whole (Wolfe, 2010). Focus changes from essentialism or instrumental understanding towards what happens 'in between,' in the relationships in specific situations. The view that communicative interactions replace essentialism has influenced the discussion on education in a direction where interpretation of lived experiences in action-oriented situations is seen as the core of education (Davey, 2012). A discussion on the role of the arts in education in the recent context thus cannot rely on traditional values but need to develop an understanding based on these new views.

A short discussion on arts and health now follows because I argue that this is an important part in a discussion on education in the recent context. I will return to this in Chapter 6. Statens folkhälsoinstitut, SFI [The Swedish National Institute of Public Health], undertook (SFI, 2005) a research review arguing that the arts must have a central place in society and school. SFI has an integrated

view on health including physical, mental, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual health. The research which SFI base their arguments on shows that experiencing art, especially artistic activity, has specific effects on health. SFI emphasise the growing problems of physical and mental health especially in the younger generations. Burnouts, eating disorders, mental unstableness, the negative health effects of a sedentary lifestyle are factors that have been identified as important for the national health care system to address (SFI, 2005). Recent research (Schraml, 2013) reports a level of serious chronic stress among adolescents in Sweden. Schraml argues that:

‘To provide adolescents with the optimal preconditions for their future life and to maintain their health and well being in the long run, by preventing chronic stress is and, in fact, must be of great public concern’ (Schraml, 2013, p.1).

Artistic activity has been identified as an important factor in reducing stress. Theorell, the main author of the SFI report, concludes that experience of the arts has specific health effects on many levels. However, he also argues that it might be even more important that the arts have a stimulating effect on people, so they can get a complete picture of their life, engage in social relations, and have the energy for their life project. Theorell argues that wider perspectives on health must be included in the discussion and ‘define health as a possibility to develop big parts of the desired life project’ (Theorell in SFI, 2005, p.80). From an educational perspective Eisner made a similar statement:

‘The ultimate aim for education is to enable individuals to become the architects of their own education and through that process to continually reinvent themselves’ (2002, p.240).

These perspectives put a focus on the contribution of arts to young persons’ well-being and motivation for life. These perspectives add to the perspectives reviewed above that integrate the arts into educational and cultural contexts. I argue that both the utilitarian, instrumental aspects of education as well as the

humanistic, essentialist position fail to meet the demands of our times. Arguments reviewed above call for radical changes, for awareness of a crisis in society and culture. These claims include that the arts are important in solving the problems we face and that there is a need to re-evaluate the role of art in education. So the next step is to look at the arts in education, but first I present perspectives on limitations of the arts to provide a balanced view of their value.

From an ethnological perspective Dissanayake (2000) shows that strongly negative culturally constructed views of the arts are prevalent in Western society. The performing arts, especially, are less valued than others. Robinson (2009) notes that the culturally constructed hierarchy between subjects in school is very strong, downplaying especially the performing arts. Dale (1990) analysed the historical background of the Norwegian school system and notes its clearly anti-aesthetic position. He concludes that this is due to a rationalism combined with a protestant view of life. He summarises the influence of Protestantism:

‘All culture based on the senses is rejected...The attitude was direct anti-aesthetic. This applied especially to art that appeal to the senses. Aesthetic pleasure becomes suspect. Novels should not be read, that is "waste times". Poetry and drama are fading away in ascetic Christianized world’ (1990, p.22, my translation).

Dale maintains, and I agree with him, that the different culturally constructed views on the arts still are part of the cultural context and a real hindrance for seeing new perspectives. I maintain that it is important to be aware of this.

Research on the Arts in Education

In the following part, I will adopt a critical stance towards research on the arts in education. However, first, I want to make clear that I fully acknowledge the body of knowledge developed in this area. A number of studies show different positive effects of participation in the arts. This research has changed the view of the value of arts. Building on it and UNESCO's *Road Map for Arts Education* Parr (2008) argues that it is a human right to have access to artistic activity as a child.

Two significant organisations in the field of Arts Education are The Arts Education Partnership (AEP) in USA and Cultural Learning Alliance in UK. On their homepage (AEP) claims that:

- A. 'Learning experiences in the arts contribute to the development of academic skills, including the areas of reading and language development and mathematics.
- B. Arts learning experiences contribute to the development of certain thinking, social and motivational skills that are considered basic for success in school, life and work.
- C. The arts help to create the kind of learning environment conducive to teacher and student success' (AEP-Arts, 2014).

Research behind their claims is summarised in a publication, *Arts Integration* (Burnaford *et al.*, 2007). It concludes with a detailed summary how the different arts contribute to 'cognitive capacities and motivations, attitudes and dispositions' (Burnaford *et al.*, 2007, p.103). The Cultural Learning Alliance also has a high profile on the value of the arts and culture in learning:

'There is clear evidence that cultural learning produces positive educational and social outcomes. It helps young people to learn more effectively, developing their cognitive skills and inspiring new ways of thinking. It also helps them to achieve more: participation in the arts helps children to do better right across the whole curriculum' (Cultural learning alliance, *IMagineNation*, 2011, p.9).

These claims are not modest. One source, Cultural Learning Alliance (2011),

drew on is *Doing Good and Doing Well by Doing Art* by James Caterall (2009). The title is already an argument for doing art. Caterall grounds his analysis on a large statistical material from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) in American secondary schools. Caterall identifies students of low or high socioeconomic status (SES) and low or high arts involvement:

‘our analysis found substantial and significant differences in achievement and in important attitudes and behaviours between youth highly involved in arts and those with little or no arts engagement’ (Caterall, 2009, p.3).

Caterall (2009) summarises the results in two categories: doing well and doing good. Doing well means that students with high arts involvement are reported to perform significantly better looking at academic development. Students from low SES with high arts involvement performed significantly better on almost every measured indicator compared to low arts students. He argues that the differences ‘in education success are dramatic by any definition’ and that the differences grows over time (Caterall, 2009, p.60). In reviews of Caterall’s book, the statistical methods are questioned and how he argues on the basis of his material (Serig, 2010). Limitations of the NELS database were found to be crucial while a number of important indicators such as family life and social relations were lacking (Ruppert, Sikes and Smyth, 2010). Winner and Hetland (2002) argue that many studies in the field of arts and education are not clear enough to distinguish between correlation and causation:

‘A correlation between some form of study (here, the arts) and some kind of outcome (here, social or cognitive) offers no information about causality’ (Winner and Hetland, 2002, p.1).

In Winner and Hetland’s review of an AEP report in 2002, they comment after reading the reports:

‘a careful reading shows that many of the studies neither claim nor support a causal relationship, as discussed...’ (2002, p.1).

They see methodological weaknesses and the tendency to do sweeping claims as major weaknesses. The presentations above all highlight the instrumental perspective on the arts. A quote from Caterall makes his position very clear:

‘The main implication of this work is that the arts appear to matter when it comes to a variety of non-arts outcomes’ (2009, p.30).

The arts are seen as a means for something else. Such arguments support the needs of people who want to see technocratic evidence of the value of arts, and these arguments have been used in political discussions on the value of the arts in school. Focus for the research on the arts in education has thus been on these issues. One well-known example is the research that stated that music enhances mathematical performance (Music Research Institute, 2014).

Koopman (2005) challenges the dominance of extrinsic arguments for the value of the arts in education and argues that these claims are misguided and unsupported. He claims that research has not shown convincing evidence that the arts improve academic performance. He instead argues that we have to focus on what the arts, in themselves, are good for. His stand is: ‘They are good for nothing. They are good life itself’ (Koopman, 2005, p.96). The attention moves from that the arts are of specific value for particular outcomes towards the importance of the arts themselves, the value of the experience of the artistic activity (Varkøy, 2012).

In the OECD report Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) provide a review of researches from 1950 on the relation between the arts and non-artistic outcomes such as cognitive, creative, motivational, and social. The authors claim that they found few significant relations between the arts and these outcomes. The report concludes that the arts might influence capacities on

other areas of life, but the arts mainly develop knowledge within their own activity, create habits of mind, and are important for the well-being and personal development of the student. As a conclusion, the authors argue that the arts strengthen the well-being and happiness of individuals. The authors mention that the arts:

‘allow a different way of understanding... an arena without right and wrong answers, they free students to explore and experiment. They are also a place to introspect and find personal meaning’ (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p.265).

They argue that the perceived decrease of the arts in school has led the discussion on the value of the arts in their transferred effects to other more established disciplines. They conclude:

‘we do not believe that the existence of arts education should be justified in terms or skills in other, traditional academic subjects’ (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p.262).

They acknowledge that innovative skills might be enhanced by artistic activity. The authors also acknowledge other positive effects, but they argue that we should first look at arts for arts’ sake and what artistic strengths can lead to. The arts make it possible for students to ‘discover their life’s work or their life passion,’ or ‘to find personal meaning’ (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin 2013, p.265). It can be argued that the authors, in their overview, emphasis cases where no transfer was observed; however, in my opinion, the material give evidence for statements that question transfer effects of arts education. This change of direction regarding the discussion on the value of the arts in education is clearly articulated in the Swedish context (Varkøy in Mathiasson, 2013; Lindgren, 2013). That the September issue (2013) of the Swedish teachers’ journal, *Pedagogiska Magasinet*, [Pedagogical Magazine] was dedicated to this theme give evidence of this development. In the Norwegian discussion on education, this perspective has been analysed by Varkøy (2012).

These recent perspectives focus on the contribution of an artistic activity, in its own rights, to education—the arts for arts' sake. However, Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013, p.256) argue that research on arts education represents 'only a tiny share of educational research' and that research needs to take a new direction. So they call for more empirical research and better methodologies and also see the strong need to:

'develop sound and testable theories about why and how arts education would have an impact on various outcomes of interest' (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p.256).

Although advocating instrumental reasons for the arts, Caterall identifies a need for more phenomenological research done on the activity in arts. He argues that future research should 'include phenomenological studies that probe the meanings of art experiences to individual children and educators' and 'what learning *in* the arts has taken place' (Caterall, 2009, p.31). What is important is to do 'observations of individuals in their high arts-involved states' (2009, p.146). A way of doing that is to ask questions of 'depth and meanings of arts experiences' (Caterall, 2009, p.31). Theorell (in SFI, 2005) also argues that future research should develop new, more precise methods that can capture the lived experience of participants in specific situations and in multi-methods settings. He argues that the challenge is to find ways to explore these experiences that go beyond the normal and thus are typically non-verbal. Both Caterall and Theorell call for more research on the lived experience of being in an artistic activity. I argue that the research in the thesis met this call. It explores lived experience in art, and it does so by developing a method especially designed to enhance verbal expressions of the lived experience. The thesis discusses a theoretical context that can encompass the value of experiences in arts for their own sake.

Transfer of Knowledge and Different Ways of Knowing

This subsection continues the discussion on transfer of knowledge and different ways of knowing and understanding. As discussed above these themes are important in the recent discussion about research on the value of the arts in education.

Winner and Hetland (2002) launch a critique against the concept of transfer used in the arts and education context. They argue that we must stop requiring more of the arts than of other subjects and that research must find other ways of exploring the value of arts other than the instrumental way of searching for transfer effect. This does not exclude that experiences in one domain of life are important in another domain. It means that developing skills in one area must have its focus in that area, and different activities such as geometry, music, and dance must have their specific quality and develop specific skills (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). Charles Desforges placed attention on the problem of the transfer of knowledge, and, together with co-authors, he gives examples on cases where no transfer occur (Hughes *et al.*, 2000). The literature on transfer effects in education shows a variety of seemingly conflicting perspectives (Bransford and Schwartz, 1999; Schwartz, Bransford and Sears, 2004). A striking feature of the research studies in the area of transfer is the use of a final transfer task that tests the direct application of learning. Bransford and Schwartz (1999) argue that this excludes any process in doing the task. They call it 'sequestered problem solving' and argue that this might be responsible for much of the pessimism about evidence of transfer (1999, p.68). Schwartz, Bransford and Sears (2004) suggest that focus has to

be changed from outcomes towards alternative ways of learning. Bransford and Schwartz argue that this view may help us better appreciate:

‘the value of a number of "humanistic" activities, including (a) "lived experiences" that introduce people to alternative perspectives and cultural assumptions and (b) studying the arts and humanities in order to better understand the nature of the human condition and one's place within it' (1999, p.84).

This liberates us from focusing on the transfer that has a tendency to misdiagnose and reduce important other forms of knowing (Schwartz, Bransford and Sears, 2004). Earlier discussions on a critique of transfer highlighted the need to go beyond the knowing that (replicative knowledge) and the knowing how (applicative knowledge) and move on to an interpretative approach, knowing with (Broady, 1977). In knowing with, we perceive, interpret, and judge new situations based on our past experiences and knowledge. Knowing with takes place through associative processes, which include:

‘an activation of non-logical relationships based on contiguity, resemblance, frequency, and other features’ (Bransford and Schwartz, 1999, p.70).

Knowledge that supports knowing with is thus tacit and may be unavailable for recall except in very rudimentary form. This knowledge involves something else than logical or scientific validity, or as Broady put it:

‘Perhaps it is authenticity. Authenticity is the property of being genuine, non-fake, as really issuing from the source that claims to originate it’ (Broady in Bransford and Schwartz, 1999, p.86).

Billet (2001) articulates that knowing is based in practice in specific social situations and not only a cognitive capacity. He also views the ability to interpret actions and situations as crucial for this kind of knowledge. Billet draws on Schon's knowing in action where:

‘knowing is held to be an active process and reciprocal process engaging with the world beyond the physical self and drawing together both

knowledge “how” and knowledge “that” ’(Billet, 2001, p.433).

This makes knowledge a process of learning from experience, where learners actively construct their own experience and where learning is a socially and culturally constructed holistic experience influenced by the socio-emotional context in which it occurs (Boud, Cohen and Walker, 1993). Associative processes focusing on non-logical relationships and tacit knowledge that we carry into the interpretation are thus basic principles of knowing *with* or knowing *in* practice. Garrick (1999) notes that it is important to realise that there are problematic issues with this view on knowledge. Tensions within and between experiences make the process of learning through experience complex. van Manen (2007) points out *pathic knowing* as a new fundament for knowing. This knowing is based in practice. Whereas theory ‘thinks’ the world, practice ‘grasps’ the world (van Manen, 2007, p.20). This grasping of the world is *pathic*. The *pathic* refers ‘to the general mood, sensibility, sensuality and felt sense of being in the world’ (van Manen, 2007, p.20). With this concept, van Manen tries to capture the embodied lived sense of being responsive to situations in life. He argues that this way of knowing is the major part of our experience but mostly overseen in research on education while it aims at cognitive outcomes. van Manen maintains that we understand the world and ourselves through the activities and through what we do. Thus he argues that the future of educational research is found in the development of what he calls a *phenomenology of practice* (2007). Through it, we may discover what we know ‘in how we act and in what we can do’ (2007, p.22). To know *in* is different from to know *of*. van Manen accordingly argues that phenomenology today may more be seen as a practical reflective method on practice than a philosophy. It can be a way of being sensitive for practice thus it:

‘operates in the space of the formative relations between who we are and who we may become, between how we think or feel and how we act. And these formative relations have pedagogical consequence for professional and everyday practical life’ (van Manen, 2007, p.26).

van Manen identifies ways of knowing that transcends the rational, instrumental reasoning in education. Lindström (2012) analyses different ways of knowing in artistic practice: to learn about, in, with, and through the arts. He argues that it is important to be aware of the different qualities that learning in artistic practice can develop. Eisner (2002) argues that in the arts we develop knowledge in and through processes.

In studies on apprenticeship, Lave (2011) gives convincing examples on how another way of knowing and thinking is developed through practice embedded in social and cultural contexts. This challenges pure theoretical and rational approaches to research, which, she argues, can be hindrances to attain knowledge. Knowledge based in practice can uncover deeper levels of the experience of individuals and is thus of major importance in developing identity (Holland *et al.*, 1998). Such research confirms that a practice-based approach exploring what is experienced in the activity of *doing* can approach themes Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) identified as important to explore. One of them is that activity in the arts ‘is a place to introspect and find personal meaning’ (2013, p.265). The research approaches of van Manen, Lave, and Holland give us examples on how their research is based in practice. In their works, the focus is on practical ways handling situations and not on knowledge outside of this process.

From an educational point of view, Biesta (2012) claims that postmodernism criticised that our relationship to the world is a knowledge relationship, and he

argues that it is an existential relationship. Postmodernist thought highlighted the importance of being in time and being in the moment and deconstructed the rational, logic way of relating to the world (Wellmer, 1986). Discussing the condition of the individual in recent society, Bauman (2006, 2011) argues that the main challenge is to be able to live with change and uncertainty. This means to live in the event, in an existence that is in motion. Kemp (2011) argues that we live in a world of change, and the ability to interpret the experienced situations in life is crucial. These authors argue that our relationship to the world is existential, and this has consequences for education. Education is thus not mainly about acquiring fixed knowledge but is about someone who learns something in a specific situation and for specific reasons (Biesta, 2012). Without this existential framing of education, Biesta (2006) sees the concept learning as an empty phrase. Here the focus is moved towards the human being as subject, not as object. It moves towards exploration of meaningfulness and uniqueness of the individual. These ideas move in a similar direction as the changed understanding on the role of arts in education earlier discussed. How individuals create and deepen meaningfulness in their lives and create a good life can be seen in the existential perspective exploring uniqueness of the individual. What then is uniqueness? Biesta makes clear that uniqueness is not something essential. It is not about 'what I have; it is not about some unique essence—but is *existential*' (2012, p.588, italics in original). The move is from *what* to *when*, from pre-given knowledge to lived experience in specific existential situations. However, this includes interpretation of situations. Biesta (2012) argues that the ability to interpret is at the core of education. This makes education weak while the focus is on open, still-not-conceptualised situations and not on strongly established knowledge. The focus is 'that students interpret and make sense of

what they are being taught' (Biesta, 2012, p.585), and this is an open process. Biesta discusses that this openness excludes education as only a qualification to something, which turns education into training for a particular purpose. The interpretative stance also challenges education as socialisation, adapting to social circumstances. Biesta uses the concept subjectification for this open situation between mere qualification and socialisation. Subjectification is a way to approach the existential uniqueness, which 'is as much about action as it is about interiority' (Biesta, 2012, p.589). Individual knowledge thus is based in both actions in the world as well in interior judgements.

Biesta approaches the question of truth. The exploration of the existential uniqueness can give us a new relationship to truth. Truth is, then, not an absolute knowledge given from outside and not an indifferent perspective among other possible perspectives but the unique truth of the individual. The discussion of truth is important 'in order not to totalise communication and interaction' (Biesta, 2012, p.591). Biesta's idea of uniqueness underlying the truth was that a person's way of being is different from everyone else, but the question is not: 'what *makes* me unique. The question rather is: When does it matter that I am unique' (2012, p.588, italics in original). This situates truth and uniqueness. Biesta's ideas come from exploring questions on democracy and social interaction. The thesis discusses the value of the arts in education. Still, I see the perspectives Biesta develops as important for my thesis and will continue this discussion in Chapter 6.

Instrumental reasons for the arts aiming at specific academic, social, or other outcomes have lost some of their validity. Also, the move towards the opposite,

a pure subjectivist stance on the role of art in education, loses itself in 'endless self-expression with little prospect of artistic advance' as Abbs (2003, p.55) put it. Lived experience in the activities of art as a way of deepening the understanding of self and creating meaningfulness is shown in studies using arts-based research methods (Leavy, 2009). I will discuss these methods later in this chapter and in Chapter 4. Here, I want to put attention on that the artistic activity includes actions expressing interior meaning. The arts can thus be seen as 'vehicles of human understanding' (Abbs, 2003, p.56) and promoter of cultural literacy, a capacity that makes it possible to change an individual's ways of thinking, acting, and expressing oneself (Bell, 2000). What is discussed here is not only about how to produce an artwork but how meaning is created through interpretation. In the case of the arts, it is a question of interpretation of something, formed and edited in a creative process (Eisner, 2002). To be able to explore the uniqueness of this process we need to interpret the process in itself, how we are *in* it. A method that can capture such experiences is needed. The distinction between *being* and *becoming* is discussed in the context of how to develop citizenship (Arthur and Croll, 2007). *Becoming* tends to be dominated by instrumental reason with a set of outcomes as aim. *Being* is situated in the actual process - the presence in the moment - and out of this judgements develop. Eisner (2002) argues that the way of knowing in the arts rests in *being in* the creative processes. This *being in* is based in an embodied action thus 'somatic knowledge must be employed' (Eisner, 2002, p.19). The following quote captures another perspective on this:

'One of the largest lessons the arts can teach is how to secure the feelingful experience that slowed perception makes possible; the arts help students learn how to savour qualities by taking the time to really look so they can see' (Eisner, 2002, p.24).

This is in opposition with pre-given instrumental aims or outcomes for the arts

and also to the arts as mere self-expression. Focus is put on the awareness in the action and how to perceive qualities. The discussion on the importance of being in the relation to the world, to the creative processes moves in the same direction as Biesta's (2012) arguments that education today should not rely on a knowledge-based relation to the world but on an existential relationship. The basis for an existential situation is to be aware of to *be in* that situation.

In Swedish context, existential perspectives on education are discussed by Dahlin (1993). Dahlin argues for an alternative view of education that overcomes both the pure rationalistic view and the view that education is the development of something already existing in the child. Both perspectives see development as cumulative and as continuity. Dahlin points out that existential education is opposed to this and thus focuses on discontinuity and authenticity. Understanding can appear suddenly in a specific situation and transcend earlier understanding. Understanding is thus seen as a process based on the passionate questioning that can give opportunities for new understandings to be awakened (Dahlin, 1993). Dahlin argues, that in education we need to question and deepen dimensions on what 'uppfattandet' [Swedish concept that covers the English words apprehend, perceive, and understand] is and explore what it can be (1993, p.95). The ultimate aim of existential education according to Dahlin is the experience of, *I am*.

I have pointed out that existential perspectives on education are seen as a possible way forwards when leaving pure extrinsic or intrinsic positions behind. These existential perspectives also put a focus on understanding in itself as a reality in a specific situation. I see this relevant in the recent discussion on the

arts in education when the focus now turns towards being, good life, introspection, and exploration of personal meaning. This move is a move in an existential direction. Eisner (2002) makes clear that work with art is grounded on a focused perception of what is there in that situation. I argue that such experiences in the arts are existential in the sense that they both include an intensified awareness of action or perception in the present moment as well as a discontinuity, something that can transcend normal situations. In the arts, the crisis and the change happen in such situation. Thus, it is not pure subjective experience but includes the encounter with the artwork. From the position the thesis takes, the *I am* is experienced in specific situations where I experience myself in artistic activities. I will return to this discussion in Chapter 6, and in Chapter 7, where I position my thesis into a theoretical context based on an expanded reading of Gadamer's ideas about *Bildung* that include existential perspectives.

Arts-Based Research

I used different arts in the thesis. The aim was to attain deeper and varied experiences of the lived experience. ABR is part of the qualitative research paradigm and uses the arts as a tool to investigate, analyse, and represent lived experience. I used the arts as a way of representing the lived experience of dance. The students did artwork, and I did poems as representation of experienced meaning. I see the interpretative part of the thesis based on hermeneutic phenomenology (HP) and the representative part based on ABR. In the process of interview, both aspects are intertwined. A discussion of perspectives raised by ABR is an important part of my thesis. Therefore, a brief review of the background of it is included. A review of the background of HP

follows in Chapter 4. The term ABR was first used in 1993 by Eliot Eisner in his work on the connection between the arts and education (Barone and Eisner, 2012). McNiff (1998) wrote a book with the title *Art-Based Research* exploring this theme. Nowadays, this term is widely used for research that includes the arts to explore ways of expanding qualitative research (Knowles and Cole, 2008). ABR includes methods that try to capture responses that cannot be put into words. They offer alternative ways of dealing with different parts of the research process such as data collection, analysis, and representation of findings (McNiff, 1998; Leavy, 2009; Barone and Eisner, 2012). ABR practitioners argue that the meanings created in working with art is a knowledge that might seem uncertain, but research shows that it can give unique access to engage with a deeper level of experience (Hogan and Pink, 2010). Sinner *et al.* (2006) argue that we need the ABR methods in situations where we cannot use other methods. Examples are mainly found in social research exploring power relations, social exclusion, and identity and when exploring extensive themes such as love, death, hope. These are typically something deep inside humans and something you are '*in*' (Sinner *et al.*, 2006, p.1238).

ABR is not focused on single facts but on multiple meanings that can be discussed and explored (Leavy, 2009). The ABR practices usually include narrative analysis, poetry, music, performance, dance, and visual arts. So a range of projects using ABR practices give evidence to the ability to access:

'silenced perspectives, evoking emotional response, provoking dialogue, promoting awareness, and cultivating increased social consciousness' (Leavy, 2009, p.259).

Baldacchino (2009) and Sullivan (2005) both argue that this form of research is different because it does not collect but generates data. A creative process is

needed. Such a process can develop the researcher and participants to be more open-minded and creative, to learn to see things differently (Knowles and Cole, 2008). New perspectives open up not only for the individual but also for the research community, and, thus, new research questions can be identified. Discussing ABR in this general context, Leavy argues that 'using the language, practices, and forms of the arts allows us to think and therefore see in new ways' (2009, p.258). Leavy maintains that the arts can contribute to different aspects of the research process: from finding new perspectives on a topic, new ways of collecting and creating data, to offering new ways of presenting the findings that can accomplish stronger resonance than the written form only:

'The arts simply provide qualitative researchers a broader palette of investigative and communication tools with which to garner and relay a range of social meanings. Moreover, the artists' palette provides tools that can serve and expand the promise of qualitative research' (Leavy, 2009, p.11-12).

Leavy, therefore, suggests that ABR is especially useful in projects that aim 'to *describe, explore, or discover*' and 'these methods are also attentive on *processes*' (2009, p.12, italics in original). Her examples and the perspectives reviewed above substantiate that using art in research gives new perspectives on knowledge and a new way to deepen an experience. The question on validity and reliability of ABR will be discussed in Chapter 4. I argue that these perspectives support the use of the arts when investigating lived experience of dance and argue that this discussion on the creative aspect of research is important for the thesis.

Reading ABR studies, the following questions became important to me: What kind of knowledge is developed in ABR practice, and how is it developed? The history of ABR shows that it has emerged out of practice as a natural affinity

between research and artistic practice. Art and science both, but in different ways, try to explore aspects of human situations and improve human understanding. They both can be viewed as 'crafts' (Leavy, 2009, p.ix). In a craft, the process is important. Knowledge is not only out there, but it is constructed in a creative process (Sennet, 2009). Seen from this perspective, the researcher is like a craftsman. Art and research intertwine, and data collection and data creation are both part of such a constructive process. This implies a break with methods conventions. It also rejects the idea of tools that are neutrally implemented because the researcher is a practitioner and thus is involved in the process. Hunter *et al.* (2002) stress that ABR is a process of meaning making. In the process, the meaning should be found, analysed, and presented. Eisner (1997) suggests that art is a process, and, as such, it is constantly changing and is dependent on the interaction between the artist and the material. He sees this as a counterpoint to positivism, which relies on stable facts and rational reflection. 'Knowledge as a process, a temporary state, is scary to many' (Eisner, 1997, p.7). The opposition between the practice-based ABR and positivistic rational knowledge is made clear here.

ABR is not only exploring the *what*, but also *how* something is experienced and understood. ABR aims at finding out what way of knowing can reach deeper levels of experience and understanding. Sullivan did research in visual arts with the focus on this question. He argues that we, in the arts, deal with knowledge that is 'transcognitive' and that is made up of different ways of knowing: 'thinking in a medium', 'thinking in a language', 'thinking in a context' (2005, p.125–128). Thinking is not activity in itself; it is, in the arts, a part of a process. Artistic activity links these different ways of knowing with one another and

establishes an in-between, where new thoughts can develop. In a state of high awareness, knowledge is developed through dialogue in relation to something in a specific process or situation. Sullivan's focus is on exploring the artistic activity in itself. I will continue this discussion in Chapter 6.

The context of ABR answers the questions on how to explore experiences in the arts as discussed above. However, the view on ABR must also be discussed. I, therefore, would like to conclude this section with a discussion on the position of the arts within ABR. Knowles and Cole (2008) and contributors in their book on ABR argue that the promising possibilities for ABR are a part of the development of the qualitative research (QR) paradigm. QR originates in the ethnographic and social research. Research on the social justice movement and studies on equality of gender and ethnic minorities ask questions that are different from those used in positivistic research. Therefore, researchers saw a need for other methods. Alternative schools of thought, not the least the postmodernism, also pressed for developing alternative methods (Leavy, 2009). In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Denzin and Lincoln give a broad overview of the different phases of QR in USA:

‘1900-1950 the modernist or golden age, 1950-1970 blurred genres, 1970-1986 the crisis of representation, 1986-1990 the postmodern, 1990-1995 post experimental inquiry, 1995-2000, the methodologically contested present, 2000-2004, the fractured future’ (2005, p.2-3).

In this overview, it is made clear that ‘the crisis of representation’ preceded the time when ABR began to be used, and ABR deals with alternative ways of representation and inquiry. In a later book, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) claim that new directions in QR are being developed. In their introduction, they mention a variety of new methods but not ABR specifically. In my opinion, this shows that ABR methods have been developed and can be seen as promising, but they

are seen as part of the social research paradigm. They are not acknowledged in their own rights but as a tool to investigate new perspectives on other fields of research.

Baldacchino (2009) introduces critical comments on the use of ABR. He questions the basic assumptions regarding the relationship between art and research. He sees a danger in the success of ABR when it is used for purposes outside of the arts:

‘Arts research does not need to gain further legitimacy by being part of another research paradigm whose *raison d’être* is historically and politically distinct from that of the arts’ (2009, p.10).

He thus argues that, from a perspective, the move of ABR towards the centre of social research is good, but from another, it can be seen as problematic because it reduces the arts to ‘effective tools for social outcomes’ (2009, p.10). Research that focuses on the arts themselves and how they specifically ‘help enlarge human understanding’ is needed (2009, p.10). Instrumental rationalism is the problem as Baldaccino sees it, and the arts must claim ‘their own autonomous ground of legitimacy as a distinct and specific research paradigm’ (Baldaccino, 2009, p.2). So the future direction of research should include ABR on the arts themselves.

I see this discussion as crucial. It shows how the purpose of research affects its direction and can do so over a long period. The arts have been successfully used in social research; however, to focus on the artistic practice itself is new, and this can explore what happens within the process of doing art. This research put the focus, as Sullivan’s (2005) study indicates, on the consciousness, experienced situations, states of mind, and processes that all

are intertwined in the artistic practice. Using the arts in these ways is a new way of exploring the human condition in different contexts. From a methodological perspective, this puts the focus on the importance of exploring the experience of the arts using ABR. In this thesis, I did this by using different arts to explore the experience of one art, dance. The method thus rests on the ABR tradition and expands that tradition by adding a comparative element between experiences of different arts. This will be further discussed in Chapters 4 and 6.

Embodiment, Dance and Education

Dance can be seen as the most existential art form because it uses the whole body, and its movements, as an instrument. However, the body is no neutral instrument. Although physical, it is part of oneself, of ways of being and behaving (Merleau-Ponty, 1962 [2000]). To exemplify this, I will review one example of the importance of the lived experience of body movements. The philosopher John Dewey became connected to Mathias Alexander who developed a technique known as Alexander technique that heightens awareness and control of the body. Dewey reported that things he had known earlier, philosophical or psychological knowledge, 'changed into vital experiences, which gave a new meaning to knowledge of them' through direct work with body movement (Dewey in Jackson, 1998, p.138). Dewey also experienced that all habits are present in every act, thus creating character. Dewey reported that he had tremendous difficulties in following Alexander's teaching, but he also experienced:

'the great change in moral and mental attitude that takes place as proper co-ordinations are established' (Dewey in Jackson, 1998, p.139).

I argue that this is a good example of the existential potential of the encounter and work with body movements. It is also an example of the complex nature of

the experience with basic body movements and how they affect us on different levels. Notably, Dewey experienced this knowledge in a different way compared to philosophical or psychological knowledge. It is vital knowledge. When he managed to be *in* the movement, he experienced a great change. These experiences are existential, and Jackson (1998) claims that they were important for Dewey himself and his philosophy.

Examples in the history of dance in education and perspectives from recent research point in the same direction as Dewey's experience. There seems to be a close connection between human consciousness and dance. Reading the sources describing the education of the early Greek society, *paideia*, it is obvious that especially the performing arts were important in the educational process. Lazou gives examples of this: (dancing) 'choreia, includes the whole educational process' (2004, p.25). Aristotle (1998) claimed that true education does not mean learning particular skills for utility purposes but developing spiritual independence and a relation to the arts. In *The Laws*, Plato (1980) argued against an education focused on specific skills. Education shall focus on the development of the whole human being. Education shall awaken initiative and free judgement (Plato in Ernst, 1980). The early *paidea* consisted of gymnastics as education of the body and the threefold choros: the integration of music, poetry, and dance (Tatarkiewicz, 1979) as an education of the inner human being. Plato (in Ernst, 1980) summarised that a well-educated human being is a human being experienced in choros and on which choros has had its effect. So *paideia* was a non-specialised education where movement, both gymnastic and expressive movement, dance played a central role. This was natural in a culture where:

'Movement accompanied by music and song was part of almost every major event in their lives, from religious cults and rituals to the educational and athletic preparation and training of the youth' (Lazou, 2004, p.17).

Lazou argues that dance is created in the tension between the embodiment of imagination and the action itself:

'If dance is exclusively human, in Aristotle's account of the soul, through the rational employment of imagination in action, it is possible to explain the well known purifying and mental balancing function of certain ancient dances and theatrical forms' (Lazou, 2004, p.64).

For Lazou, the educational effects of dance have to do with the specific knowledge and state of mind that is created in the dance performance.

From an ethnological perspective, Dissanayake (2000, 2009) argues that the temporal arts are at the core of how to develop culture, and these are important parts of education. Dissanayake defines temporal arts as dance to music and words and argues that their importance is that:

'participants' gain a felt sense of social identity, and identification...and a felt sense of meaningfulness...and a felt sense of competence' (Dissanayake, 2009, p.542).

She also focuses on the effect of the movement itself—the experiences that originate in being *in* the movement:

'The effects of temporal arts is not only to be found in themes or subjects but more in the emotional effect they have on participants, how they are being moved in that movement. These emotional experiences are basic for belonging and identity of groups and strengthen individual identity and social competence' (Dissanayake, 2000, p.133).

Lynn Smith (2003) argues that the central placement of dance in many cultures is due to the fact that dance can open up deeper existential knowledge of self and world. In more recent context, arguments that dance can help to understand the complex relations between somatic experience and culture and thus articulate identity are proposed (Albright, 1997). Cancienne and Snowber (2009) argue that dance is a way of learning about the self and that body

movement is a locus of discovery of the self. Dance practice can thus be viewed as 'historical, contextual, discursive, and interconnected domains of lived meaning' (Henry, 2000, p.253). Leavy notes that dance has a '*transcendent consciousness-raising potential*' (2009, p.180, italics in original). This might be because dance can be a 'transformative human action that expresses the individual's being without purposive ends' (Leavy, 2009, p.180).

Dewey's existential experiences in movement and perspectives reviewed above makes it possible to argue that the human being can find in dance what Dewey called vital knowledge. It can inform us about existential as well as emotional and cognitive aspects of being that cannot be accessed in any other ways. Dance theorist Stinson claims that dance teaches a person:

'to feel from the inside, and correspondingly how to use the body as a source of knowledge and locus of meaning' (2004, p.163).

Grosz (1994) distinguishes between two sides of embodiment research: the inscribed and the lived body. Social and cultural meanings are inscribed in the body movements, the behaviours. Through the lived body, we explore the reality from the inside. Our existence is based on that the body includes these two realities (Grosz, 1994). Merleau-Ponty considers how the lived experience of the body is a tool for us to experience the world and to function in it. The body is 'my point of view upon the world' (1962 [2000], p.70). But the body is, in his view, something active, a creation:

'A novel, poem, picture or musical work are individuals, that is beings, in which the expression is indistinguishable from the thing expressed, their meaning, accessible only through direct contact, being radiated with no change of their temporal and spatial situation. It is in this sense that our body is comparable to a work of art. It is a nexus of living meaning, not the law for a certain number of covariant terms' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962 [2000], p.151).

These perspectives, collected from different contexts, highlight that, in dance, and in embodied movement we have a way of attaining knowledge that cannot be found in any other activity.

Perspectives from current research and philosophical thought add a new dimension to this idea. Earlier, body movement and the human mind were seen as quite separate. But recent research shows that the body movements have a major role in developing the human mind (Johnson, 2007; Shusterman, 2008; Gallagher, 2011). Body and mind are integrated. The title of one recent book, *How the body shapes the mind* (Gallagher, 2005), tells the story. Sociological research explores how body awareness and movement are basic traits in establishing identity (Shilling, 2008). Early childhood research argues that the experience of dynamic movement patterns in music and body movement ground both emotional and cognitive development (Bråten and Trevarthen, 2007; Stern, 2010). Philosophic aspects on embodiment are getting much attention (Clark, 2008; Shusterman, 2008). Research shows that thought and gestures are strongly related, which means that gestures are not only body movements, but they also carry meaning, like verbal language, only in another form (McNeil, 2005). Understanding includes understanding actions, other person's actions, as well as my own actions in situations in life (Bruner, 1990; Gallagher, 2011). The development of intersubjective communication in early childhood rests on perceived and/or acted movement in voice and body (Malloch and Trevarthen, 2009). Researchers argue that the basic condition of human existence is found when dancing to music (Dissanayake, 2009; Merker, 2009). Rittelmeyer (2012) notes, and in my opinion this is an important note, that researches done in this field are used in different disciplines that are not

thoroughly related to one another. He sees this as a hindrance to including these researches in practical educational theory. So a call for a practical educational theory encompassing this research is done. I argue that such a theory must move from the pure philosophical realm of existence into the vital world of movement. van Manen (2007) strongly insists on this. He highlights the importance of pathic knowing, discussing it in Aristotelian terms as *phronesis*, the wisdom of action. This way of knowing presumes that meaning is to be found in the action and that the action can express meaning. In this context, an exploration of the lived experience of dance is meaningful, and such an exploration would open up core issues in the human condition.

Research on Dance in Education

In 2004, a report was published that gave a summary of literature on research in dance education (Faber and Bonbright, 2004). Researchers identified articles on dance education in the time span of 1926–2002 and found 1,131 articles. Only 159 of them met their criteria for research. The main bulk of these 159 are descriptive, none was phenomenological. Faber and Bonbright (2004) argue that this lack of analytical perspectives is due to the fact that most reports are written by practitioners that mainly describe what they do. Dance educationalist Karen Cann (2003) calls for an analysis to see why so little research had been conducted, and she urges researchers to find methods for exploring dance. I experienced something like this when I participated at the 17th World Congress on Dance Research in Naxos 2003. Some presentations included elements that deal with exploration with participants. One was phenomenological (Krantz, Merker and Madison, 2003). Many presentations were historical or critical evaluations of different dance methods including or not including an educational

perspective. In *Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education*, Bageley and Castro-Salazar (2012) give an overview of research on dance in education. They argue that earlier focus had been on exploring dance in different cultural contexts, but recently an interest in dance as a methodological tool for generating and analysing data can be seen. Because dance can be 'a source for knowledge and a focal point of understanding' (2012, p.580), it can help to 're-evaluate the meaning of qualitative research' (2012, p.588). Research on dance can open alternative ways of how research should be undertaken and represented, and, thus, they situate dance:

'within a wider call for methodological renewal, in which research approaches are able to engage with and (re)present the sensory, emotional and kinaesthetic realities of social and cultural phenomena in the twenty-first century to greater effect' (2012, p.588).

But concluding their analysis of the current position of dance in qualitative research in education, they point out:

'At the time writing the academic authorisation for the use of arts-based mediums in qualitative research and particularly the use of dance as one of those artistic forms remains undoubtedly contested and certainly embryonic' (2012, p.588).

So dance in education has been poorly researched. This impression is strengthened when looking at the number of studies identified and analysed by Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013). Their data includes the report *Reviewing Education and the Arts Project* written in 2000, and a vast bulk of studies, two databases in English and 10 in other languages. Of 510 identified studies, only 24 were about dance. A total of 142 studies were identified where music and cognitive outcomes were explored; 85 studies explored theatre and cognitive outcomes; 53 studies examined visual arts and cognitive outcomes; and 12 studies examined dance and cognitive outcomes. There is obviously a lack of research on dance in education. Leavy (2009) concludes that research

on dance has started to be explored just recently. She notes the low status of dance in society as one explanation to this big deficiency. Stinson (1998) argues that one reason for the low status of dance is that it is seen as a typical women occupation and, thus, repressed in the social hierarchy. Kramer (2003) argues that research on dance in education has to move away from ideological positions to strive to reach effects that lie outside of dance itself. In dance, it is only possible to reach such goals of education, 'which are inherent in the basics of dancing and the different phenomenon of dancing' (Kramer, 2003, p.136).

Exploring the lived experience of dance has been done in phenomenological research on dance. A pioneer on phenomenological research on movement, Sheets-Johnstone, argues that we, from the start of life, are infused with movement, and movement is the way we live and make sense of the world. 'We literally discover ourselves in movement' (1999, p.136). Sheets-Johnstone argues that in phenomenological investigations of dance, it is possible to investigate lived experience of dance and be able to attain pre-reflective consciousness. So lived dance experiences are a source of self-knowledge (Sheets-Johnstone, 1999) and would also be of interest in education. Johnson (2007) expands this discussion on the importance of movement in making sense of the world and self. However, very few studies have been conducted to explore students' meanings of experiences in dance (Frichtel, 2012). Frichtel points out Bond and Stinson's studies as reference. Bond and Stinson (2000/2001, 2007) analyse data from different studies on dance in education and provide an important contribution to knowledge on what students experience in dance. They acknowledge the great problem of verbalizing experiences of dance. Children often refuse to talk about their experience of

dance, and many only use the words fun or exciting. Bond and Stinson thus include alternative ways of expressing the experience using poem, picture, and narrative into their studies. They review research on experiences of dance in education that include about 600 schoolchildren. Results show that the significant experiences of dance were: freedom; feeling authentic and being who I really am; transformation; forgetting everything else but dancing; being in another place/time; and a magical or spiritual dimension. Authors argue that results are consistent across age groups, cultures, and gender. A summary of the results is that dance is a way to explore who I am and might become while dance can go beyond the given and open up for a transformation (Bond and Stinson, 2000/2001). They report that the children referred to states of being that were significantly different from the everyday consciousness. Quotes expressing freedom and references to self were very frequent, and they note that it is striking that children mention expressions of self-perceptions. They found a difference between older students who often refer to finding an authentic self, and young children who refer to becoming something else. They argue that the strong experiences students report are complex in nature and difficult to describe. They call for further evidence that such experiences in dance are widespread. In a phenomenological study, Frichtel (2012) used interviews and different ways of reflecting on dance. Sixty-four undergraduate students participated. Results show three major categories of meaning related to dance: freedom, transformation, and community. Students often use the word freedom to express the possibility to be oneself and the word transformation for different experiences of change. The word community was used for cooperative, supportive and caring relationships. Frichtel argues that these experiences have to do with authentic ways of experiencing, expressing, and

relating and she argues that dance is a 'powerful learning experience' (2012, p.252). Bracey (2004), using hermeneutics and phenomenology as lenses, examined what the students in a university dance program experienced in dance. She found that the students explored their own identity and that the process and the experiences dance elicited are not fixed. Dance is experienced as an ongoing process that offers unique possibilities. Rustad (2012), using phenomenological methods exploring teacher students' experiences of improvisational dance and contact improvisation, argues that she found two important themes in all interviews: self-image and positive feelings. The experiences in dance are experienced as different from experiences in sports. These studies carried out in an educational context point out that significant experiences of dance are of an existential nature, to be oneself and to transform oneself. Experiences are dynamic and evaluated as positive. This is also found in studies on adults. Exploring experiences of choreographers, one study summarises the experience of dance as: finding, revealing, and knowing oneself (Miller, 2010). A phenomenological study on the experience of own movements shows that 'learning to feel trust, learning to let go, and learning that I/matter' are important (Lussier-Ley, 2010, p.197). This combination of the experience of self and trust and motivation for life is found in other studies. Picard and Bailey (2009) interviewed 63 ballet dancers, between ages 9 and 15, and found that significant experiences in dance are commitment, motivation, and self-awareness. One of the main findings proposed as a contribution of dance to education, is that experiences in dance enhance motivation and endurance (Bond and Stinson, 2007). Other studies show that dance helps building motivation and strength in life (hooks, 2003; Levine, 2002; Noddings, 2003; Bond and Richard, 2005). In addition to this, Fraleigh (2000) argues that

dance is another way of knowing and another way of thinking. Through this other way of knowing, the self-awareness of the students grows. She asked students in her study to write reflections and personal poetic vignettes. Coe (2003) developed a method of written reflection in dance pedagogy. This extended the students ability to express experiences of dance, and Coe argues that dance connected them to themselves. This confirms the findings of Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) that lived experience of dance tends to be interpreted from existential perspectives and mainly deals with experiences of self and transformation of self.

As reviewed, researchers who have made reviews about research on dance in education argue that it is very limited. It is a tiny share of the research on the arts in education, which is a tiny share of educational research in general (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). But the existing research that explores lived experiences of dance in education clearly points out some major themes where experience of self, exploration of self, transformation of self, and motivation seems to be the most important. This is in correspondence with arguments found in the historical context of dance in education as discussed above. Theoretical approaches to explanations of the importance of body movements for consciousness are found in the research on embodiment (Shusterman, 2008). However, within the field of the arts in education Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) call for theoretical approaches that can discuss the arts in education based on research on the experience in the arts. In this thesis, I identified a theoretical perspective that can be used to discuss and understand the findings of the thesis—a revised version of *Bildung*. The following chapter discusses some perspectives on *Bildung* in the current

context, and in Chapter 5, the findings of the thesis are placed into a dialogue with central ideas in Gadamer's concept of *Bildung*.

With this chapter I presented a background to the research questions, discussed the role of the arts, especially dance, in education, identified the lack of research in this area, and discussed the need to develop new methods that can capture lived experiences *in* the arts, especially dance. I, thus, argue that the review have substantiated the claim that there is a gap in knowledge on the value of dance in education. It is also evident from the review that new methods are needed to explore the experience of the arts. The review shows that current focus regarding questions on the role of the arts both in education and in qualitative research is put on the importance of the arts themselves.

Chapter 3 - Theoretical Perspectives on *Bildung*, the Arts and Practice

Perspectives on *Bildung*

In this chapter, perspectives on *Bildung* are discussed. In the search for a theoretical context to place the thesis in, I became aware that Gadamer's understanding of *Bildung* encompasses many aspects of the findings. As discussed earlier in the recent discussion on the role of the arts in education, it is important to develop a theoretical context that can give an in-depth understanding of the research findings drawn from artistic activity (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). I argue that a new understanding of Gadamer's ideas on *Bildung* is a possible way to develop a new theoretical context, and this will be discussed in Chapter 7. In Chapter 4, Gadamer's and Heidegger's descriptions of the ontological underpinnings of HP are discussed. In Chapter 5, a comparison between the findings and perspectives in Gadamer's philosophy is presented. Here, in Chapter 3, I discuss some aspects on *Bildung* to give background to the following discussions: first, some general aspects; second, recent philosophical perspectives on *Bildung*; third, the need to focus on practice and different kinds of movements; and fourth, a review of Gadamer's ideas of artistic practice.

Schultz (2012) summarises the definition of *Bildung* as a process of self-development in the encounter with the world. In everyday language, *Bildung* is used in the context of individual processes of learning. The origin of the ideas about *Bildung* is found in German philosophy of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Herder developed an ideal, the cultivation of humanity. He saw this as an opposition to the enlightenment rationalist view of the human (Herder, 1989).

He connected this ideal with the concept *Bildung*. 'The purpose of our existence is aimed at *Bildung* of humanity' (Herder, 1966, p.86; my translation). Herder saw *Bildung* and culture as intimately associated. Gadamer (1993) discusses *Bildung*. He notes that Kant did not use this concept. Kant discussed cultivating the capacities of the human. Gadamer notes that Hegel spoke about *Bildung* and *Sich-bilden* [educating or cultivating oneself] when discussing the duties to oneself. Wilhelm von Humboldt developed the ideas of *Bildung*:

'we say *Bildung*, we mean something both higher and more inward, namely the disposition of mind which from the knowledge and the feeling of the total intellectual and moral endeavour, flow harmonically into sensibility and character' (Humboldt in Gadamer, 1993, p.11).

The aim of *Bildung* was the development of the whole human being through culture, the humanities, and the arts (Klafki, 1999). In the Swedish context, 'Bildning' [*Bildung*] is still discussed as a valuable aspect of education (Gustavsson, 2003). The fate of the ideal of *Bildung* in Germany is that it took a direction towards conservatism, which made it 'repugnant to authors like Nietzsche and Heidegger' (Nicholson, 2012, p.72). A tone of 'snobbery came to prevail. . . marking a social distinction' (Nicholson, 2012 p.72) and *Bildung* was often replaced by 'pedantry' (2012, p.73), and this made the ideas of *Bildung* problematic 'to the point where they came to look ridiculous to succeeding generations' (Nicholson, 2012, p.72). I argue that both the bourgeois aspects of *Bildung* and the following discreditation of it are still part of a general understanding of *Bildung*. Gadamer was clear about this and discussed perspectives that develop the meaning of *Bildung*. He argued:

'*Bildung* as such cannot be a goal. In having no goals outside itself, the concept *Bildung* transcends that of the mere cultivation of given talents, from which the concept is derived. The cultivation of a talent is the development of something that is given, so that practicing and cultivating it is a mere means to an end. Thus the educational content of a grammar book is simply a means and not itself an end. Assimilating it simply improves one's linguistic ability. In *Bildung*, by contrast, that by which and

through which one is formed becomes completely one's own' (Gadamer, 1993, p.11).

The idea here is not to develop something given, some intrinsic talent. It is not about to assimilate knowledge collected from outside of oneself like the grammar book. It is about making something completely one's own, which includes a transformation, a change of oneself. This is a non-essentialist position. For Gadamer, the activity of *Bildung* is something in itself. He leans on Hegel's discussion of the truly free self-consciousness, in-and-for-itself, where Hegel pointed out the value of work. Gadamer summarises Hegel's view on this by stating that through the work, the activity to form things, the self forms itself and man gains a sense of himself. This is contrary to the experience of alienation:

'Thus what constitutes the essence of *Bildung* is clearly not alienation as such, but the return to oneself' (Gadamer, 1993, p.14).

Drawing on Helmholtz who highlighted the importance of artistic feeling and tact in human sciences, Gadamer argues that the active element of *Bildung* is that: 'the mind has a special free mobility' (1993, p.15). This mobility makes it possible to be open for other points of view thus Gadamer argues that: 'the cultivated consciousness has, in fact, more the character of a sense' (1993, p.17). In the discussion that follows these statements on the consciousness as a sense Gadamer puts a focus on the importance of practical knowledge. He uses the Aristotelian concept *phronesis*, practical wisdom, and argues that it is 'another kind of knowledge' that 'is directed towards concrete situations' (Gadamer, 1993, p.21).

Phenomenology is based on the assumptions that both rational subject-object thinking and a pure subjectivist stance fails to understand the importance of the

lived experience of the world (Moran, 2000). On these grounds, Gadamer also rejects a pure aesthetic consciousness. The interest has to be directed towards the lived experience in a factual situation, a process in *Dasein* [existence]. Here, the activity developed in the arts play a major role. The following quotes clarify Gadamer's position:

'We have seen that it is not aesthetic consciousness but the experience of art and thus the question of the mode of being of the work of art that must be the object of our examination' (1993, p.102).

'the work of art is not some alien universe into which we are magically transported for a time. Rather, we learn to understand ourselves in and through it, and this means that we sublimate the discontinuity and atomism of isolated experiences in the continuity of our own existence...' (1993, p.97).

Gadamer argues that the aesthetic consciousness is part of being cultivated because it includes the ability to distance oneself from 'immediate acceptance or rejection' and respects what 'does not correspond to one's own expectation or preference' (1993, p.84). It is a way to overcome the subjectivist stance but not 'some alien universe' without connection to something other than the self. It has to be connected to the factual, real world. Focus is here on the self in dialogue with something other than the self. In a dialogue with others we can become aware of our mode of being and transform ourselves into something new. A dialogue is built on two persons that discuss something. However, a third element is always there. So, it is not only about understanding the subjective stance of another person but more on being able to understand how others view the world compared to our own view and judge if that is important to us (Gadamer, 1993). For Gadamer, even self-understanding is such a three-way understanding. The experience of doing something, modes of being in the world, can ground a three-way understanding. Gadamer (1993) sees language

in this way. Language establishes a third element. It is through language that we describe and understand our situation in the world.

I argue that understanding how to overcome the rational, the subjectivist, and the pure aesthetic perspective, is important for understanding not only Gadamer's position but also the current discussion on arts in education. Education is not only about rational understanding or instrumental values. It is not only about being able to deepen subjective introspection or about developing sensitivity and aesthetic feeling. It is about an encounter with something real in our experience. In that meeting, the dialogue between self and world is possible. In this dialogue, we can interpret how we perceive the world and self, and we can transform our understanding of both. *Bildung* is rooted in modes of being in the world and modes of being in an interpretative dialogue with the world (Davey, 2012). These basic assumptions of *Bildung* are closely related to the research questions of the thesis. The thesis explores the experience of being in dance and through the method takes an interpretative, dialogical stance towards the experience of dance.

In the following section, recent philosophical perspectives on *Bildung* are reviewed. Included is a critique on the ideas of *Bildung* and how activities and views in the discussions on *Bildung* are relevant in recent culture. In Chapter 4, a critique on Gadamer's philosophical position is presented.

Recent Perspectives on *Bildung*

In a recent context, it is questioned if it still is possible to use the concept *Bildung* (Biesta, 2002; Masschelein and Ricken, 2003; Ruin, 2011). Levinas (in Biesta, 2012) made clear that the inhumanities done during the last century in the name of different definitions of what humanity is have strongly contaminated the concept humanity. In the educational context, the postmodern critique on *Bildung* is articulated (Lövlie and Standish, 2002) and claims made that the concept has to be reformulated. Biesta (2002) argues against the existence of a universal humanistic quality. Still he argues that there might be a task for *Bildung* and that is to develop the ability to see things differently, alternative 'presents' (2002, p.389). Ruin (2011) argues that it might be best to leave the concept of *Bildung* behind. However, he also argues that the critical activity found in *Bildung* is at the core of the recent struggle to overcome rational knowledge and explore new ways of understanding. Ruin (2011) claims that the activity to translate the alien into the own and transform oneself is what remains of *Bildung*. Thus, Ruin (2011) argues that the essence of *Bildung* is found in Humboldt's discussion on translation. In translation, something alien shall be incorporated into the known. This process includes a dynamic process where the alien is made part of the own language, and, at the same time, there is a possibility to expand and develop the own language. What is important here is not to propose a particular way to translate but to understand that the process of translation is a process of growth, growth out of the own and into the own (Ruin, 2011). What is discussed here is *how* to encounter and *how* to interpret. This process gets lost when utility and instrumental reasons are dominating. Sá Cavalcante Schuback argues that economy, efficiency, and productivity define everything as function and information, and this leads to the idea that 'anything

and anyone can be used by anything, anyone and whenever' (2010, p.73). To rely on the own interpretation and to be open for alternative ways of viewing things are seen as weak in relation to rational knowledge (Biesta, 2012). The pure instrumental perspective changes the human to something weak, to something 'disappearing' and as 'the fragility of a turning point' (Sá Cavalcante Schuback, 2010, p.73). However, Kemp (2011) argues that the task for an individual in recent society is to become a world citizen, and this citizenship is grounded on the ability to interpret and act in different cultural and social contexts. In recent globalized society, different kinds of meaning collide in the space in between our understanding of ourselves, of others, of culture and of the world. This challenges the individual (Kemp, 2011). All of us must handle this and, in the process, justify our own way of being. According to Kemp (2011), this process can happen when we educate ourselves through interpretative participation in the world. It transcends the dominance that authoritarian demands have on us as well as the liberal self-education of the individual. Kemp maintains that:

'All educational theory needs a philosophy of education, because education has to do with a fundamental feature of human communication – namely, the transmission of attitude and insight' (2011, p.200).

A philosophy that can meet the challenges of current times needs to be, according to Kemp:

'a comprehensive rethinking of educational-philosophical hermeneutics and normative-cosmopolitan theory of cultivation' (2011, p.201).

To rethink the value of the ability to interpret is at the core of this thinking. It is the strength that the global cosmopolitan needs to develop. Education, in this view, is to educate oneself through the encounter with others. Educational philosophy thus needs a developed concept of hermeneutics. What is then the

fundamental question of philosophical hermeneutics? Kemp's answer was a question, 'what are we to understand by a self?' (Kemp, 2011, p.207).

As discussed in Chapter 2, Biesta (2012) argues that interpretation is the central theme in the discussion on philosophy of education today. It is the activity through which it is possible to explore uniqueness and develop informed judgements, truths. He argues that interpretation differs from learning. Learning focuses on the activities of individuals and, thus, has lost value as an educational concept today (Biesta 2005, 2006). Interpretation differs from education that implies that there is something essential to be developed. It differs from formation that implies that something is formed. Interpretation builds on an encounter, a relation to the world. So it also extends views on education as self-formation (Uljens, 2002; Wimmer, 2003). It also extends the idea that *Bildung* is an attainment of skills or competencies that make it possible to promote oneself (Peukert, 2000). Authors above argue that the ability to interpret is what remains of *Bildung* in the current context. It is an activity that can establish a dialogue between the world and the self. In this dialogue, both the world and the self are explored. This puts focus on hermeneutic perspectives on education.

In his introduction to a hermeneutical theory of education Fairfield argues that it is not a theory remote from practice. In addition, he sees this practice based approach of great importance today:

'It is an interpretation of what we do when the process is successful - what aims we have achieved and what has made their achievement possible - and equally important, what happens to us in the course of doing - what has transpired behind our back and how we ourselves have been constituted. Education belongs to the larger life process that is the search for understanding of our world and ourselves and is continuous with

human experience in general. It is not a special form of activity or technique of which ordinary experience knows nothing, but at the best of times raises such experience to a higher order of explicitness and sophistication' (Fairfield, 2012, p.3).

As discussed in Chapter 2, van Manen (2007) argues that if education shall contribute to a deeper understanding of self and world, it has to do a radical turn towards a *phenomenology of practice*. Exploring movement, actions in life can make it possible to renew education, to develop other ways of knowing. He argues that this knowledge, *pathic* knowing, is found in the embodied practice, which:

'inheres in the sense and sensuality of our practical actions, in encounters with others and in the ways that our bodies are responsive to the things of our world and to the situations and relations in which we find ourselves' (2007, p.11).

He continues by arguing that to develop this kind of knowledge is an ethical corrective to the instrumental character of contemporary life. So what kind of knowledge is then raised here? What do we learn in 'how we act and in what we can do' in 'sensitive practice'? (van Manen, 2007, p.22). van Manen grounds his perspective on HP but moves away from pure philosophical approach towards practice. As Gadamer puts it:

'Learning does not mean learning to use a pre-existent tool for designating a world already somehow familiar to us: it means acquiring a familiarity and acquaintance with the world itself and how it confronts us' (Gadamer in Davey, 2012, p.47).

In van Manen's context this view of learning is radicalized towards sensitive practice.

Hogan (2000) argues that radical implications concerning education today can be drawn out of Gadamer's ideas. However, they are implicit in his view of *Bildung* and have to be worked out in relation to educational situations. Hogan's focus is set on how identity emerges in school, to question purpose of teaching,

to be aware of and see how questions on authority and justice are handled in education (Hogan, 2000). These questions can be discussed in a rational, subjective, and phenomenological context. Hogan argues that the radical power in Gadamer's view is to be found in the investigation of what happens to us when we understand, not theoretically, but how and when understanding takes place. Hogan argues that this perspective does not develop political or social visions for change but focuses on the actual change of the individual. He identifies six themes from Gadamer's concept of *Bildung* and applies those to questions on: the primacy of play, the principle of effective history, the predisposing of thought by language, the plurality of tradition, the fusion of horizons, the dialogue that we are (Hogan, 2000). However, with all respects to Hogan, I argue that from a practice-based perspective, these concepts need to be radicalized and put into an active context, something we do and have experience in doing. The practice-based perspective on *Bildung* asks: How to integrate play in our practice? What happens when horizons fuse? How do horizons fuse? Answers to such questions are situated in life and related to modes of being. A revised perspective on *Bildung* is, in these views, grounded on a radical turn towards interpretative knowledge based on the experience of action, movement.

Davey summarises Gadamer's ideas on education as an attempt:

'to articulate a process of self-formation which neither depends on the self alone (it requires that a subject be ontologically placed in what is not self) nor culminates in a final self-image (*Bildung* involves the continual transformation and transcendence of the self)... It is clear, then, that the educative or formative element within *Bildung* has to do with achieving a maturity and intensity of response to the demands of a precarious form of existence' (2012, p.48-49).

This perspective avoids focusing on the idea that everything depends on the self. It also avoids the idea of the final creation of an image of the self. I argue that depending only on oneself can create alienation or put too many demands on oneself, and an intense work on creating a self-image 'out there' might make one lose contact with oneself. If the formative element of *Bildung* has to do with achieving maturity and intensity in response to existence, one asks: How is this achieved? Davey argues that education seen in this perspective is based on experiences of movement. He identifies three different movements that we are in. (1) Content and nuances in social, cultural and intellectual history is in constant movement. (2) The meanings of language constantly shift while language mirrors cultural changes. (3) Local meanings and practices in families, social groups and individuals change (Davey, 2012, p.49). All these levels interact with one another and Davey sees the process of education in a constant change and formation of one's own position in the surrounding movement. The ability of the individual to move in these movements and be able to articulate the process of self-formation is dependent on the move between the self and the self-image. Becoming sensitive and open to movement in situations is seen here as a basis for the educative process of being able to widen the horizon to a new understanding. Resting in the maturity and intensity of the response to existence is understood as being in the movements of life. Davey (2012) links these ideas on *Bildung* to Varela's views of a living system that maintains itself. A living system rests on its own processes, and this makes it possible to respond to other influences. It cannot rely on something essential while an essence:

'would not only lie outside and be structurally different from the inner workings of the living system but, being of a necessarily determinate character, it would limit disadvantageously the response capacity of that system' (Davey, 2012, p.44).

Davey (2012, p.45) argues that Varela's ideas 'fits well with the ontological basis of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics' because 'communicative interaction' is the basic activity in both. In addition both positions are:

'sustained by mutually penetrating conceptual entailments attached to the terms experience, experiment, and education (formation)' (Davey, 2012, p. 45).

These terms are all connected to 'communicative (interpretative) interaction', and this indicates that the process of *Bildung* is only found 'in the doing' (Davey, 2012, p.45). The purpose of a living system is to sustain itself. The purpose of *Bildung* is to understand oneself, self-education. Davey's ideas are developed out of the perceived need of the individual in recent society and how the ideas of *Bildung* can contribute to the development of other ways of understanding self and life other than rational explanations. Davey argues that *Bildung* rests on different kinds of movement and, thus, call *Bildung* a 'moving experience' (Davey, 2012, p.49).

From a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, Wiercinski argues a similar position:

'We live in a time when conflicting existential views coexist in a way never witnessed before, causing many to try to justify their personal views and their way of life' (2012, p.119).

An education that can meet this challenge includes a 'critical inquiry' into our being in the world, and that 'self-understanding concerns our experience in the world' (Wiercinski, 2012 p.119). What is important for Wiercinski is not only to be in the world, be in the action, but also to expand understanding of life and take responsibility for the actions. Wiercinski (2012) argues that an important aspect on *Bildung* in recent society is the ability to be in dialogue with life. To be

in dialogue with life makes it possible to understand and form oneself. Wiercinski highlights the importance of 'being open to conversation' with life and opening up for 'new experiences' (Wiercinski, 2012, p.113). In his view, this is the core of a recent concept of *Bildung*. Wimmer (2003) adds to this aspect in his discussion about time and how *Bildung* can be turned towards the future. He argues that to be open for the future in the present moment is an essential part of *Bildung*. For Wimmer, this is a way to re-establish *Bildung* in the recent context, where rational knowledge and pre-given futures contest life. He moves into an existential dimension and argues that *Bildung's* turn towards the possibilities in life is dependent on trust and hope. The ability to be in the movement of time is grounded on them. Hope 'establishes a relation to the fundamental' (Wimmer, 2003, p.181). Hope is a mood, a feeling that something promising will come. I include this short review of Wimmer's ideas because it focuses on the idea that our relation to the world is existential. It points out the fundamentals of being in dialogue with life. Trust establishes a possibility to be in the situation and hope for the future is based on the factual moment; trust makes it possible to open new horizons.

These views on *Bildung* discuss broad perspectives on movement and place the future of *Bildung* in the interpretative exploration of meaningful activity, movement situated in real life. How meaning is created as an interpretation of something outside oneself and still can be an expansion of oneself was the question Humboldt originally discussed as the fundamental question of *Bildung* (Ruin, 2011). As Ruin emphasises, this includes growth. It is a change, a move towards something new. This fundamental question on *Bildung* today does not

concern text but how to create meaning in encounters with the world and move, change oneself, towards new perspectives on existence.

Gadamer's discussion on different kinds of movements shows his awareness of the value of them. He argues that mental wakefulness itself is a kind of motion:

'when someone is looking at something, this is when he or she truly sees it, and when one is directing one's thinking on something, this is when one is truly pondering it. So motion is also a holding oneself in being, and through this motion of human wakefulness there blows the whole breath of the life-process, a process that ever and again allows a new perception of something to open up' (Gadamer in Davey, 2012, p.49).

In the introduction to *Truth and Method*, (*T&M*), Gadamer points out the importance of the movement of understanding:

'Heidegger's temporal analytics of 'Dasein' has, I think, shown convincingly that understanding is not just one of the various possible behaviours of the subject but the mode of being of 'Dasein' itself. It is in this sense that the term "hermeneutics" has been used here. It denotes the basic being-in-motion of 'Dasein' that constitutes its finitude and historicity, and hence embraces the whole of its experience of the world. Not caprice, or even an elaboration of a single aspect, but the nature of the thing itself makes the movement of understanding comprehensive and universal' (Gadamer, 1993, p.xxx).

The quality to move, move attention, or hold oneself in a movement is found in the question. Questions bring something in movement. To question is to open up for movement. To question is to open up for listening. To understand is to be able to move the attention, to question, hear the answer, and ponder on it. To question establishes a dialogue. Gadamer argues:

'There is no such thing as a method of learning to ask questions, of learning to see what is questionable. On the contrary, the example of Socrates teaches that the important thing is the knowledge that one does not know. Hence the Socratic dialectic - which leads, through its art of confusing the interlocutor, to this knowledge, - creates the conditions for the question' (1993, p.365).

I argue that this is a crucial point in Gadamer's perspective on *Bildung*. It is crucial to create conditions for questions and awareness of the nature of the

question and to be able to listen to, hold oneself in being, and be open for the answers—the new perspectives. This creates a moving basis for education. *Bildung* thus puts a focus on process and the formation of processes. There are no means for an end. A rationalistic position might try to define an end state of *Bildung*, but the ideal of an end state is contradictory to the basic principle of Gadamer's view of *Bildung*. It leads away from the encounter with reality and practice. It leads away from the experience of movement in its different forms: cultural, social, in language, in individual encounters; being-in-*Dasein*. This view on *Bildung* corresponds well with the recent ideas discussed above. However, as discussed above, they must be grounded on practice, in exploration of lived experiences of being in different kinds of movements.

Artistic Activity as a Process of *Bildung*

In *T&M*, Gadamer (1993) demonstrates how the ontological fundament for *Bildung* is best expressed through the works of art. Art does not deliver a rational message or information. Art does not rely on the subjectivity of the artist that forms the artwork. Art is something else, something that happens in the process in between content and action. Gadamer explains this in detail. He uses a performance of a drama as example. The written content of the drama does not make it a drama. The actors in themselves do not make it a drama. Only when the actors are playing the drama, in the performance, is the drama appearing. It is appearing, happening, in a specific way that the situation affords. The artwork 'acquires its proper meaning in being mediated' (Gadamer, 1993, p.117). This is the way Gadamer sees truth; it happens under specific conditions. This will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

Gadamer discusses and makes clear that rational, subjective, and idealised aesthetic influences have to be moderated; otherwise, a meaningful whole cannot appear. It is the same discussion as the justification of HP but this time, done in a practice-based activity. The artwork happens due to specific conditions:

‘My thesis, then is that the being of art cannot be defined as an object of an aesthetic consciousness because, on the contrary, the aesthetic attitude is more than it knows of itself. It is a part of the event of being that occurs in presentation, and belongs essential to play as play’ (Gadamer, 1993, p.116).

In *T&M*, in the chapter *Play as the clue to ontological explanation*, Gadamer (1993) analyses this condition. He starts with looking at the word *Spiel* [play] arguing that the original meaning of words often gives reliable understandings of the words and that metaphorical uses of a word can help us see the meaning clearer. Regarding the word *Spiel*, Gadamer argues that we use it metaphorically in words such as the ‘play of light, play of the waves, play of forces’ (1993, p.103). In each case, what is intended is a to-and-fro movement that is not tied to any goal that would bring it to an end. The word *Spiel* originally meant ‘dance’ (Gadamer, 1993, p.103). This to-and-fro movement describes an activity where the movement in itself is the important factor. Gadamer argues that this ability to move and be aware of the movement in between is the fundament for understanding of *Dasein*: ‘Play fulfils its purpose only if the player loses himself in the play’ (Gadamer, 1993, p.102). So there can be no fixed intentions outside of the movement, no specific goals. Play is movement resting in itself and still changing. In this state of mind, the artist can form an artwork. In this state of mind the audience is invited to participate in a drama, in the event, and the audience can be transformed through the participation. The subject-object relation must be altered into a meeting, something happening in the play.

The discussion on being moved and transformed is crucial. Different movement qualities are at work here. One is the movement from the person towards the artwork, the attention. This movement establishes an in between and overcomes the mere subject-object relation. Another quality is the movement that is captured in the artwork, the actual formation. The third is the movement that the artwork initiates in the person, and the fourth is the transformation of the person that happens through this encounter. The transformation is a movement in itself. Such a discussion makes sense as seen in Heidegger's (2010) description that the fundamental experience of *Dasein* is temporal and that understanding itself is a movement. Thus the temporal movement quality of *Dasein* is best expressed through a temporal art, as in Gadamer's example. To hold oneself in movement, be in the activities, be in what is done, is a way to move from philosophy to embodied actions in life. This is how *Bildung* works in practice. Gadamer analyses the character of a truth that reveals itself through the practice of drama. These thoughts already capture the core of the ontological basis for HP and will be further discussed in the following chapter.

My aim with this section was to open up for perspectives on *Bildung* that I found relevant for the thesis. The ability to interpret situations in life and the ability to *be in* and to explore different kinds of movement are, as argued above, the main activities in the recent ideal of *Bildung*. From a theoretical perspective, this justifies the interest to explore what students experience in dance and affirms that an interpretative method is relevant for this purpose. Thus, the research questions of the thesis can be placed into these perspectives on *Bildung*.

Chapter 4 - Methodology

The method was developed out of the research question, and thus the ontological context was not given beforehand. However, I present here the philosophical and ontological background of the thesis because it is connected to Chapter 3. In the second subsection, I describe the process of developing the method. The third subsection is a description of the method and the procedures. In the last subsection reflections on quality and limitations of the research are made.

Philosophical and Ontological Background

The thesis explores students' lived experience of dance. Exploring lived experience places the thesis into the phenomenological context. Therefore, a short introduction to phenomenology is given followed by philosophical perspectives on the ontological underpinnings of the thesis.

Drawing on a quote from Lester, Butler-Kisber argues that phenomenological inquiry is a powerful way for:

‘understanding subjective experience, gaining insights into people’s motivations and actions, and cutting through the clutter of taken-for-granted assumptions and conventional wisdom’ (Lester in Butler-Kisber, 2010, p.51).

Creswell argues that the basic assumption in phenomenology is that the understanding of reality is related to our consciousness of it, directed by our intentionality. Creswell further states that reality is only perceived ‘within the meaning of the experience of an individual’ (2007, p.59). Lavery (2003) argues that Husserl viewed consciousness as a dialogue between person and world. In the lived experience, impressions from phenomena and mind meet, and, in this consciousness, the essence of the perceived phenomena can be revealed.

Basic concepts, such as *intentionality*, to direct one's attention; *phenomenological reduction*, the method to achieve the knowledge in consciousness; *lived experience*, the experience itself and *the life world*; the relationship between us and the world we live in, deal with how the dialogical relationship between a person and life is established (Lavery, 2003). The focus on lived experience in lived situations makes phenomenological research methods able to explore the richness and ambiguity of existence:

‘The magic comes when we see ordinary, taken-for-granted living as something more layered, more nuanced, more unexpected and as potentially transformative; when something is revealed of the *extra-ordinary*’ (Finlay, 2012, p.33, italics in original).

The two basic approaches to phenomenology, descriptive and hermeneutic, have been analysed from different perspectives (Moran, 2000; Creswell, 2007; Butler-Kisber, 2010; Finlay, 2012). In descriptive phenomenology, researchers ‘aim to reveal essential general meaning structures of a phenomenon’ (Finlay, 2012, p.21). The researcher stays close to what is given. In HP, the researcher makes ‘an interpretation of the meaning of the lived experience’ (Creswell, 2007, p.59). In the thesis, interpretation is important because the students themselves did interpretations of their lived experience in a variety of ways and reflected on their interpretations. I, then, interpreted their interpretations. This places the thesis in HP. Therefore; a review of philosophical perspectives on the ontological basis for HP follows.

Heidegger (2010) gives the philosophical basis to HP. Heidegger's fundamental argument is that we cannot step out of the situation in which we exist. Being-in the world and being-in time are concepts he uses for the process of existing, and interpretation is part of how we are situated in the world (Heidegger, 2010). We are not outside the situation but *in* it, but being in it we encounter the world.

The German concept *Dasein* includes both perspectives. In *Being and Time* (2010) Heidegger argues that the basic phenomenological experience is to exist:

'This being which we ourselves in each case are and which includes inquiry among the possibilities of its being, we formulate terminologically as *Dasein*' (Heidegger, 2010, p.7).

This basic awareness of being is connected to ways of understanding, the questioning of being, which can lead to an understanding of being. Heidegger accordingly argues that:

'to work out the question of being means to make a being - one who questions - transparent in its being' (2010, p.6).

The phenomenological quality of this perspective becomes clearer when Heidegger discusses that the way to get access to *Dasein* must 'be chosen in such a way that this being can show itself for itself on its own terms' (2010, p.16). Heidegger's definition of phenomenology is: 'to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself' (2010, p.32). Heidegger argues that a direct showing of a phenomenon is impossible; it is only possible through something, through an activity. It: 'is possible only *on the basis of a self-showing of something*' (2010, p.28, italics in original). Here, Heidegger makes clear that we should not confuse the appearing and the self-showing as a phenomenon:

'the self-showing that makes appearing possible, is not appearing itself. Appearing is an *announcing* of itself through something that shows itself' (2010, p.28 italics in original).

The experience of *Dasein* is thus always mediated through something. Heidegger uses the terms being-in as expression of the existential situation. He analyses different being-in: being-in the world, being-in as such, and being-in time. Being-in is described as activities, ways of being. That existence is based on being-in time makes it a process including past and future. Being-in the

world is described as an encounter with the everyday realities carried by different activities:

‘to have to do with something, to produce, order and take care of something, to use something, to give something up and let it get lost, to undertake, to accomplish, to find out, to ask about, to observe, to speak out, to determinate...’(Heidegger, 2010, p.57).

The things in the world are interpreted through our active participation in the world. Things are not seen as objects but something that we can use. Heidegger calls it ‘the handiness’ of things (2010, p.69). The handiness of a thing is rooted in the way of being of a thing and its relationship to our activities. Heidegger thus argues that we experience the world through our activities, and that experience gets a meaning through our active participation in it. Heidegger defines our relation to the world as ‘care’ (2010, p.57): care for, taking care of, to care for what one is doing, to care for the situation in which one is. To be-in something is to care for that situation and also to be able to dwell in it—be in it and perceive it. ‘Dasein, *ontologically* understood, is care’ (2010, p.57, italics in original). This makes clear that Heidegger sees *Dasein* as an activity, a way of being in the world. It is to care for our movements in the world—to care for how we encounter the world through our movements, and this makes possible to be in the world and understand the world and ourselves. van Manen summarises Heidegger’s position:

‘From the perspective of Heidegger’s ontology, Husserl’s primal impressionable consciousness is already an abstraction of how we find ourselves in the world. Heidegger says that we are always already practically engaged in the context of life. For Heidegger the origin of meaning is not found in some primal realm but right here in our actions and in the tactile things in the world that we inhabit’ (van Manen, 2007, p.17).

Heidegger discusses a way of understanding that is different from conceptual, rational understanding. Charles Taylor highlights the importance of Heidegger’s work because it ‘helped us to free us from the grip of rationalism’ (1993, p.317).

Heidegger's ideas on truth, as situated and possible to attain through a dialogic, interpretative activity, are radically different. For him, truth appears in situations. Truth exists in activities. The epistemological question of how to attain truth is answered by the fundamental claim that the basic mode of existence is to question. The interpretation of *Dasein* is important because the questioning, the struggle to understand being, is fundamental. Here, Heidegger sees that the task for hermeneutics is to make the basic structure of being accessible for understanding:

'Phenomenology of Dasein is *hermeneutics* in the original signification of that word, which designates the work of interpretation. But since the discovery of the meaning of being and of the basic structures of Dasein in general exhibits the horizon for every further ontological research into beings unlike Dasein, the present hermeneutics is at the same time "hermeneutics" in the sense that it works out the conditions for the possibility of every ontological investigation. Finally, in so far as Dasein has ontological priority over all other beings – as a being in the possibility of existence - hermeneutics, as the interpretation of the being of Dasein, receives the third specific and philosophically understood, *primary* meaning of an analysis of the existentiality of existence' (Heidegger, 2010, p.35, italics in original).

Heidegger later discusses in *The Origin of the Work of Art* (2006) the question on interpretation of existence in relation to the arts. He argues that truth is found in the works of the arts. The arts are activities, ways of revealing truth because they mediate existence and reveal core elements of existence. The artworks develop the understanding of *Dasein* in a culture. Heidegger (2006) points out that the arts are the practical setting-to-work of truth. In poetry, Heidegger sees the highest potential for revealing the truth. In his view, language is the main source of how we construct our knowledge of the world; it is in itself an interpretation of the world. Heidegger (1977) argues strongly against a rational and technocratic explanation of life and sees a great danger in the idea that thinking has become technical information processing. He maintains that this leads away from being-in, from the existence and that this has deep

consequences for human culture causing humans lose connection to existence. 'Homelessness is coming to be the destiny of the world' (Heidegger in Moran, 2000, p.244). He sees language as a possible home: 'Language is the house of Being. In its home human beings dwell' (Heidegger in Moran, 2000, p.244). This existential perspective gives a deepened understanding of why Heidegger argues that the use of a poetizing language is an important part of human nature. Poetry, the highest form of language as Heidegger sees it, is at the core of existence in many ways. It is the best example on how truth appears. Language is part of our interpretations of the world, how we can reveal truth. Language in itself is both part of the world and part of my understanding of the world and it can be a home where human beings can dwell in a world where rational thinking prevails.

Gadamer developed Heidegger's thoughts. In the introduction to *T&M*, Gadamer (1993) positions himself. He makes clear that science cannot claim to be the only method and only truth. Instead his investigations will seek:

'the experience of truth that transcends the domain of scientific method wherever that experience is to be found, and to inquire into its legitimacy. Hence the human sciences are connected to modes of experience that lie outside science: with the experiences of philosophy, of art, and of history itself. These are all modes of experience in which a truth is communicated that cannot be verified by the methodological means proper to science' (Gadamer, 1993, p.xxii).

Gadamer argues that the experience of a work of art is a truth but a truth that is contrary to the rationalistic concept of truth. This:

'constitutes the philosophic importance of art, which asserts itself against all attempts to rationalize it away. Hence together with the experience of philosophy, the experience of art is the most insistent admonition to scientific consciousness to acknowledge its own limits' (1993, p.xxiii).

With this, Gadamer positions himself against methods of natural science and rationalism. He also positions himself against the existence of pure perceptions. He argues that it is not possible to see perception as a pure response to stimuli:

‘Pure seeing and pure hearing are dogmatic abstractions that artificially reduce phenomena. Perception always includes meaning’ (1993, p.92).

His main argument against these positions is that they, in different ways, distract our attention from our being-in the world, being-in time. Truth is revealed when we interpret situations where we encounter something that appears before us. Gadamer (1993), therefore, examines the ability to interpret and argues that understanding itself is of a dialogical nature. This means that interpretation is fused with linguistic, cultural, historical, and social prejudices, and he argues that it is not possible to bracket out these prejudices because they are part of our understanding. However, in dialogue, through encounter and factual meeting with something different, we can become aware of our biases.

Gadamer rejects the idea of fixed methods for research in the humanities.

Meaning is always under construction and:

‘Hermeneutics is an *art* and not a mechanical process. Thus it brings its work, understanding, to completion like a work of art’ (Gadamer, 1993, p.191, italics in original).

If a rational process is a linear process from one object to another, from uncertainty to objective truth, Gadamer argues that a hermeneutical process can be seen as moving in circles from questioning to interpretation to understanding to new questions. While this is a process, no fixed, objective truth can be attained. The aim is to through questions open up new horizons of understanding (Gadamer, 1993, p.375). Gadamer uses Heidegger’s concept of the hermeneutic circle and argues that in interpretation, meaning is revealed ‘in

the oscillating movement between whole and part' (1993, p.191). Gadamer clarifies that when Heidegger introduced the circular structure of understanding, he derived it from 'the temporality of Dasein' (1993, p.266) and Gadamer argues that this way of understanding can correct and refine 'the way in which constantly exercised understanding understands itself' (1993, p.266). So it is a process in time. In time, we never return to the same moment again although we might return to situations that look the same. The circle is thus a process of returning to oneself, being-in specific situations; it is a movement. The aim is to understand understanding. The phenomenological return to the things themselves, to the concrete, lived human experience, is the facticity that Gadamer built upon when discussing methods.

The Activities in the Arts as Ontological Basis

In *T&M*, the chapter *The Ontology of the Work of Art and Its Hermeneutic Significance*, Gadamer grounds the ontology of HP. Gadamer first discusses the activity of play:

'When we speak of play in reference to the experience of art, this means neither the orientation nor even the state of mind of the creator or of those enjoying the work of art, nor the freedom of a subjectivity engaged in play, but the mode of being of the work of art itself' (1993, p.101).

Gadamer argues against subjective meanings in the arts and then focuses on the mode of being of art. As reviewed in Chapter 3, he uses drama as an example. Only in the actual play is the drama existent, and only then is the truth of the drama revealed. Gadamer makes clear that the truth of the artwork has a double origin—what he calls 'a double mimesis' that is fulfilled in the actual performance of the drama, 'the writer represents and the actor represents' (1993, p.117). The meaningful whole acquires its 'proper being in being mediated' (1993, p.117). It has to happen; it appears, and when it happens, it is

a transformation of the elements that make up the play. By transformation Gadamer means:

‘that something is suddenly and as a whole something else, that this other transformed thing that it has become is its true being’ (1993, p.111).

Gadamer proceeds in his analysis and includes other arts and the humanities.

In the introduction to *T&M* he makes clear:

‘But the book does not rest content with justifying the truth of art; instead, it tries to develop from this starting point a conception of knowledge and truth that corresponds to the whole of our hermeneutic experience. Just as in the experience of art we are concerned with truths that go beyond the range of methodological knowledge, so the same thing is true of the whole of the human sciences’ (1993, p.xxiii).

The ontological underpinning of HP rests on Heidegger’s and Gadamer’s conception of truth. Truth in the human sciences is revealed in processes of understanding. The best example of how truth reveals itself is found in the experience of poetry or a drama. No fixed methodological knowledge can attain this. The method is to be in the experience, return to it. The method is to live with questions that make a dialogue with the world possible.

These philosophical perspectives constitute the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the thesis. The research question of the thesis is to explore what meanings are created in the process of expressing the experience of dance. Here writing a poem and drawing a picture are the activities that mediate the experience. Enhancing the possibilities to interpret and express created understanding in verbalised form is the second aim of the thesis. These aims stay very close to the ontological and epistemological background of HP.

Critique and a Move Forward

Gadamer's philosophical approach has met critique. Moran argues:

'his stress on human linguisticity can be seen as a kind of linguistic idealism, and his embrace of historical relativism may also be a significant weakness in his philosophy' (2000, p.286).

Such arguments imply that Gadamer cannot overcome basic factors that might limit his interpretations. Researchers working with hermeneutics (Hirsch, 1967; Betti in Moran, 2000) argue that Gadamer is imprecise in interpretations and not critically aware of how to evaluate an interpretation. Moran argues that Gadamer is more interested in the interpretative process than in the correctness of truth and, thus, not interested in 'measuring truth against falsity' (Moran, 2000, p.284). From a recent position, Kemp (2011) summarises the critique on Gadamer and focus on the critique that Habermas developed. 'Gadamer's mistake was to make the historical-hermeneutic interest universal' (Kemp, 2011, p.205). This made Gadamer accept given historical-cultural views as valid. However, power positions are strong in society and they influence social relations thus 'the critique of ideology must be superior to hermeneutics' (Kemp, 2011, p.205). Ideological views, such as Gadamer's, do not take this in consideration. Moran (2000) argues that Gadamer was aware of the necessity to take a critical stance towards tradition and therefore avoided a too strong optimism. Kemp argues that Ricouer showed how 'the appropriation of tradition and the critique of ideology can fertilize each other' (2011, p.206). This happens when it is realised that critique of ideology always comes from a specific standpoint resting on traditions and that a critical distance to tradition is needed to be able to discuss it. It is important to be aware of this critique. Gadamer's views are radical in their arguments against rationalism, and critical awareness of weaknesses, in his thinking, are thus even more important to include in a

review of his position. Although discussing the importance of practical action, Gadamer's perspective was strongly based in philosophy. In Chapter 3, it was discussed that Gadamer's thoughts are replete with radical ideas for practical changes in education, but this also implies the fact that Gadamer himself has not developed the practical side of his philosophy or views on education much. Heidegger was clear about the limitations of philosophy and once noted:

'It is absolutely right and in order to say, "you can't do anything with philosophy." It is only wrong to suppose that this is the last word on philosophy. For the rejoinder imposes itself: granted that we cannot do anything with philosophy, might not philosophy, if we let ourselves be engaged with it, do something with us?' (Heidegger in Caputo, 1999, p.56).

Here, Heidegger moves the question towards what happens with us being in the activity of philosophy. Gadamer's thoughts about *Bildung* rest on a philosophical sphere and thus limited. However, his thoughts on the general direction for developing education are clear. What is lacking is a practical research on different activities and exploration on if they 'do something with us'.

The Development of the Method

The development of the method started with an exploration of the research question. Considering the whole process, I now see that it had its own logic. It was not clear to me at the start that it was HP that I should work with and that its ontological background was closely related to the research question. The purpose of the first part of this section is, therefore, to show how the research question was developed into a method and to justify the choices made. It is an important part of making the process transparent. Transparency is an essential part of the trustworthiness of a study (Saumure and Given, 2008). The different steps and decisions made are described. This is important to attaining transparency (Butler-Kisber, 2010). The first subsection deals with the

background of the method. The second is a description of the development of the method. The third is a reflection on the relation among research, researcher, and participant. This part also includes reflections on the quality of the research.

Background

I explored themes related to the research question to identify possible ways to develop a method (Clough and Nutbrown, 2007). In theory, this sounds good, but in practice, it was demanding. Later I found this quote from van Manen that expresses this tension in the search for a method:

‘The methodology of phenomenology...tries to ward off any tendency toward constructing a predetermined set of fixed procedures, techniques and concepts that would rule-govern the research project. And yet, it is not entirely wrong to say that phenomenology and hermeneutics as described here definitely have a certain *methodos* - a way. Significantly, Heidegger talked about phenomenological reflections as following certain paths, “woodpaths”, towards a “clearing” where something could be shown, revealed, or clarified in its essential nature. However, the paths (methods) cannot be determined by fixed signposts. They need to be discovered or invented as a response to the question at hand’ (van Manen, 1990, p.29).

I had ideas, originating in practice, of what might be important to explore. Clough and Nutbrown (2007, p.89) argue that a ‘feeling’ or a ‘hunch’ as a point of departure when deciding methods can be ‘an important methodological consideration’. The first ideas for the method originate from previous experiences done in artistic practice and research. Earlier, I used a phenomenological method (Krantz, 2007). I had ideas about video recording dance lessons in school and to use these as a point of departure when interviewing pupils in middle school about the importance of dance. Ideas about the importance of multimodal activity when exploring experiences were also a part of this first draft of the method. The first new step was to explore the literature on experience with a focus on art and education.

I identified relevant perspectives in the writings of John Dewey. In *Art as Experience* (1934 [2005]), Dewey describes experience as a unitary whole that originates in perception. He mentions further that thought begins with an unanalysed whole, but in this wholeness, he sees different relations:

‘An experience has a unity that gives it its name, *that* meal, storm, that rupture of friendship. The existence of this unity is constituted by a single *quality* that pervades the entire experience in spite of the variation of its constituent parts. This unity is neither emotional, practical, nor intellectual, for these terms name distinctions that reflection can make within it’ (1934 [2005], p.38, italics in original).

Here the experience is described as a unity. It is specific, here and now. Reflection can find different perspectives on the experience: emotional, intellectual, or practical. However, the unity is always more than one of the perspectives that can be drawn out of it. Dewey discusses that this whole consists of a particular way of active interaction with the perceived objects. The name of the chapter, *The Organization of Energies*, where Dewey discusses composition of a whole gives a picture of how he sees this:

‘For nothing enters experience bald and unaccompanied... Its very entrance is the beginning of a complex interaction; upon the nature of this interaction depends the character of the thing as finally experienced’ (Dewey, 1934 [2005], p.168).

Dewey describes a process, and one part of the interaction depends on the idea that many senses are active in all perception:

‘what we find is the very opposite of a single sense functioning alone, or of a number of senses merely adding their separate qualities together. The latter are coordinated into a whole of vitality by their common relations to objects’ (Dewey, 1934 [2005], p.131).

So different perceived qualities merge into one perceived quality and that is the vital basis of the experience. Dewey analysed the activity of the person being in the experience and argues that it is part of the perception. He argues that the activity of the self in encounter with perception is a matter of rhythm. His short definition of rhythm is: ‘It is ordered variation of changes’ (1934 [2005], p.160).

One important factor in the activity of the self is that our purpose directs our attention towards a specific end. Thus, to be able to cope with the complex nature of experience, the intentions must have an open character and that means that the self can change the purpose constantly—can change direction in the perception. However, shifts in attention are done within the experience and are a part of the experience of the perceived:

‘Attention must move, and, as it moves, parts, members, emerge from the background. And if attention moves in a unified direction instead of wandering, it is controlled by the pervading qualitative unity; attention is controlled *by* it because it operates within it’ (Dewey, 1934 [2005], p.199, italics in original).

My conclusions after reading Dewey were the following. An experience is a dialogue between a perception that involves different senses and the activity of the self. A method that tries to capture experience should be aware of this complex nature of experience. The unitary, temporal nature of an experience can be approached if we are sensitive to what happens in the process of interacting with it. To be sensitive is to be able to move the attention, to be aware of the rhythmic nature of how we encounter the experience that is to engage in ordered variation of changes; to move between modalities; and to move between different forms of reflecting on the experience. The focus of my interest now moved from the multimodal aspect of experience towards the interaction of the self with perception and the different ways of relating to the experience.

The next step was to read Merleau-Ponty. In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty (1962 [2000]) makes clear that the body ‘is the meaningful core’, and in it, ‘we learn to know that union of essence and existence which we shall find in perception generally’ (1962 [2000], p.147). The body is the centre of the

process of perception and experience. It influences how we experience, and it makes experience possible. Merleau-Ponty argues that experience is a unity built on multimodal perceptions. We see, hear, and smell all at the same time, and these impressions are in the process of perception through the integration of our body into one experience. The embodied movement is, for him, the point of departure in exploring the lived experience. The lived meaning is found *in* the situation, *in* the process of the bodily expression of it. Merleau-Ponty discusses the unity, tension, and double nature of lived experience using the example of touching something with the hand:

‘this can happen only if my hand while it is felt from within, is also accessible from without, itself tangible for my other hand, for example, if it takes its place among the things it touches, is in a sense one of them, opens finally upon a tangible being of which it is also a part. Through this crisscrossing within it of the touching and the tangible, its own movements incorporate themselves into the universe they interrogate, are recorded on the same map as it; the two systems applied upon one another, as the two halves of an orange’ (1968 [1987], p.133).

To be in the embodied movement makes it possible to crisscross between having attention on the touching or the touched to be able to move constantly between the two. This constant dialogue constitutes the experience of my own activity. Merleau-Ponty (1962 [2000]) argues that this is a process that moves between attention and judgement and an internal dialogue based on the perception of the body. He argues that it is fundamental for human consciousness and that meaning is to be found in the interaction between the experience of the perceived and the expression of the experience. Experience is both perception and expression. Therefore, he argues:

‘our body is comparable to a work of art. It is a nexus of living meaning, not the law for a certain number of covariant terms’ (1962 [2000], p.151).

In an educational context, Merleau-Ponty (1964) highlights the importance of the embodied interaction between the child and parents and with other persons

in the surroundings of the child. He sees the embodied, intersubjective movement as fundament for knowledge of oneself, for self-recognition from early childhood through one's life. These perspectives highlight that knowledge on experience rests on embodied movement. The method to be aware of experience is to crisscross between the two perspectives, to feel the body movement from inside and to experience it as something in the world. Through these perspectives focus was put on the value of the expressive body movement as a locus or nexus of lived meaning. Earlier, I had ideas about video-filming children dancing, looking at the video, and asking the children about what they experienced. I now realised that in the method, I had to stay close to the lived experience of doing, being in the dance. I also realised that it was important that the dance expresses something and that a reflection on the experience could be done, by asking what students experienced while dancing. To crisscross between the activity of expressing and the experience of the body; between attention and judgement, should be an important factor. These embodied experiences might enhance and open up new knowledge of oneself.

From an educational perspective, Egan (1997) argues that we must use the somatic dimension to a much higher degree in education. He highlights the need to anchor consciousness in the body and that it is possible to establish a relationship between body and the world by using metaphors anchored on the body. Metaphors mediate between body, experience, and language. He argues that this dialogue between body and metaphors based on body experience can open up a cognitive dimension. A study done by Svendler Nielsen (2009) explores this. Her study builds on Merleau-Ponty's and Egan's ideas and on Sheets-Johnstone (1999), who argues that movement is the basis for

consciousness. She developed a new method *multi-modal interviewing* (2009). It is a method that emphasises the nonverbal, giving children the opportunity to focus on the felt sense in relation to different modalities. She used drawings, colours, sounds, words, music, and dance as expressions. She argues that this way of interviewing is an educational practice that develops children's ways of learning. She notes that children respond to sensuous modalities in different ways and anchoring the children on the dance enhances the ability of the children to experience and to express themselves. She argues that this positively affects: 'children's well-being and quality of life' (Svendler Nielsen, 2009, p.91). Reflecting on this, I saw that a multimodal approach anchored on dance and the use of different arts as expression can open up the experience and enhance the ability to express it. The study underpins that the use of shifting purpose, to move between modalities or activities is important for exploring experience. However, while Svendler Nielsen's purpose was to open up different ways of experiencing, my purpose is to focus on and deepen one specific experience, the experience of dance. The different artistic representations should, in the thesis, be possible to reflect on and the student should thus be able to interpret one experience in a deeper way.

The wider reading on ABR deepened my understanding on the different arts that mediate and represent different aspects of the experience (Knowles and Cole, 2008; Leavy, 2009). I discussed the contribution of ABR to qualitative research in Chapter 2, and, here, I want to focus on specific questions regarding the method. Jongeward (2009, p.239) argues that when discussing how artistic experience can inform educational research one needs to understand 'how making art is both a process of inquiry and a process of

creating a representation'. Seen from a methodological point of view, this double position of artistic activity points out possible activities to explore. One activity is the process of creating a representation through art. Another is the process of inquiring the meaning of the representation, and it is here where the different arts give different contributions. Poetry and visual arts position themselves differently in this process. Leavy (2009, p.64) discusses poetry as a 'feeling picture', an inner picture. Poetry turns towards an inner 'place where knowing and not knowing touches' (Cioux, 1994, p.38). To write is a process of discovery and transformation and writing, thus, can reveal deeper levels of understanding and inspire critical reflection on life experience (Martin, 2011). Poetry is sensitive to what happens at the moment and can represent the essence of an event (Leavy, 2009). The visual arts are turned towards an expression that is visible and placed in the world. They can make people look at something in 'a new way' (Leavy, 2009, p.220) but also see themselves in a new way. An image can reflect the complexity of who we are in the outer image (Jongeward, 2009). The reading on this theme confirmed my own practical experiences that the different arts can express experience in different ways and in the interpretation of it can reveal different qualities. In the teaching, I had experienced the vitalising effect of merging elements of visual arts and elements of poetry and music with dance. The reflections on this gave support to the use of dance, poetry, and picture. The view that poetry is turned more towards exploring the inner image and that pictures express the inner in an outer picture were important aspects. A study done by Sava and Nuutinen (2003) expanded the perspective on how a direct relationship between these experiences could be fruitful. They established a dialogue between experiences of one situation as expressed in visual arts and poetry. They argue that

something new is created through this meeting. A 'third-space' is established in 'the performative dialogue between writer and maker of pictures' (Sava and Nuutinen, 2003, p.532). They argue that this dialogue is a possibility to transform the experience and also to expand the possible languages to express it. They see this third space as 'strongly experimental, sensory, multi-interpretative' as a meeting place where something can 'be created anew, as a field of many understandings' (2003, p.532). For the method, this substantiates the use of direct dialogue between experiences in different forms of representations. Sava and Nuutinen's study explored the dialogue between two artists. I aim at developing an internal dialogue in one person. It shall be accomplished through the dialogue between experiences of different artistic expressions of one experience. A direct comparison of the experiences of dance, picture, and poem is an important factor. I also saw a question focused on what contribution the different arts provide to explore the experience as important.

Ideas from Vygotsky's psychological perspective on experience, language, and education became important for me. Vygotsky argues that consciousness is a unity that consists of different components, a 'complex holistic system' (1986, p.4–5). He identifies active components in this unity and compares consciousness with a word. In a word, meaning is created through 'a close amalgam' of thought and language, so it is not easy to tell if 'it is a phenomenon of speech or a phenomenon of thought' (Vygotsky, 1986, p.212). Consciousness, where contradictory factors are active, can never be deconstructed while there is constant movement between the constituent parts of this whole. This process, this continual movement back and forth, is what

Vygotsky (1986) calls the psychological unit, and it is active in all conscious activities. He argues that the process-based relation of thought to word makes the development of thought possible: 'Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them' (1986, p.218). Thought finds its 'reality and form' through speech (1986, p.218). So verbal descriptions are not conceptual statements coming from somewhere outside consciousness but are the result of a process. Thoughts, meanings, are developed and constructed in the act of speaking. The process of creating meaning is mediated through an activity. This is basic for Vygotsky's educational ideas about mediated learning (Kozulin, 2003). I was inspired by these ideas because they point out the value of activities that mediate in the process of creating meaning and that the actual process of doing it is the centre of the process. Merleau-Ponty (1962 [2000]) also argues that the activity of speaking is part of creating meaning. For the method, this put the focus on creating a variety of situations where students could speak about their experience of dance. I also found support for the idea that the artistic activity is needed to mediate the experience and that artistic activity makes possible to approach the experience.

Method

With the above perspectives as background, I developed the following method. First students shall be asked to express through dance their experience of why dance is important for them. The next step is to express this experience of dance in a poem and a picture. It is important that the students express an experience that is of high importance to them, not just to describe a movement or videos of their dance. They shall be *in* an expression of something they find important, originating from an experience. Then, the interview shall start with a

question about what they experienced while doing the dance, poem, and drawing the picture. This question focuses on the lived experience of the activity, not on their experience of dance in general. To avoid conceptual answers (Finlay, 2012) and to stay close to the activity of doing the expressions is the aim of the first question. A second question, 'Why is this experience of importance to you?' focus on the experience and explore the meaningfulness of it. A third question, 'Is this experience of importance to your life?' puts focus on the experience again and open up to reflection on the meaning of the experience in a broader, life-world context. These three questions shall be asked in relation to each artistic expression. Questions that focus back on the experience again through a comparison of the different artistic representations shall come afterwards. The last part of the interview shall include questions exploring the importance of the whole process. These questions evaluate the method. I included a direct question on what students experience the picture and poem express. I used Dewey's view of the value of rhythmic encounter with the experience to create a process that constantly returns to the experience of dance from different perspectives.

Interviews are often used for qualitative research, and a number of variants on how to do an interview exist. Each researcher has to find her/his own way of designing the interviews to fit the research question (Kvale, 1996). I designed a semi-structured interview. As I developed the design, I began to doubt if it was possible to do it. I had to do pilot studies to see if this was a realistic design. To test the method's plausibility, I interviewed two young adults, one female and one male, who had finished school recently. I explained my method and asked them what they thought about it and what problems do they see in it. They both

argued that they would be able to do the interview and encouraged me to continue. They made it clear that I had to be cautious when presenting the tasks and both of them agreed that it was important that the students understood that the tasks should not be completed artworks. Another important aspect they mentioned was how to handle the introduction: no tape recorder from the start, no pressure that the tasks had to be fulfilled, total freedom in what they are about to do, and a friendly, relaxed, and playful attitude. They also said that the students should get the feeling that their contribution is important. They also advised me to show the students that I am also engaged not only in my research but also in the theme. I noted everything they mentioned and followed their advice in the pilot study. This talk also confirmed that I should interview students in the 12th grade of school because they might have the maturity to do these tasks and the ability to reflect on the experience.

I did three pilot studies. One participant in the pilot study was a professional dancer, the other was a young mother, and the last finished school few months earlier. I asked the first participant to express her experience of dance using dance, picture, and poem. I asked the second participant to express her experience of being a mother using dance, picture, and poem. I did the semi-structured interview following a guide that was not far from the one I used later. In the interview guide, I added a question on what was the most important moment in the whole process. This question aims at identifying a specific moment that stood out (Dewey, 1934 [2005]), 'stands out for its vividness' (van Manen, 1990, p.65). Answering this question shall make students reflect on the whole process by relating the parts to the whole. It was exciting to hear the first two participants develop their understanding of their experience and reflect on

its wider meaning. To see the dance, pictures and poems were exciting! Both participants expressed that they, beforehand, thought that it would be difficult to do the tasks, but they later found out in the actual process that it was easier than they thought and that the process was fun and interesting to do. I learned through mistakes how to handle tempo, how much to say to keep the dialogue of the character, and how much time was needed to complete the interview. Both participants did it in less than one hour, so this was the time I set for the third interview. I listened to the taped interviews and realised that I had to wait longer before I comment on things, never to interrupt, and not ask follow up questions if not really necessary. They sometimes needed more time to find words. However, I also had to encourage them to answer. I learned that my task was to mediate between the reflections on the different representations and not to urge on explanations. Thus, I explored and reflected on different aspects of interviewing. It was important to me to use the pilot study as tool to refine the research questions and procedures (Sampson, 2004) and to develop a relevant line of questions (Yin, 2003). What they said was interesting both for me and for them. I realised that the method worked and that it opened up many perspectives. I slightly changed the structure of the questions. I had the impression that participants developed their understanding of the experience through the whole process, that's why I included a last question. This question should ask participants to repeat the whole process and give them a chance to experience the moment of doing the dance again. Then, I did the third pilot study. I did the whole process, which included a presentation of the ethical protocol, and discussed this with the student. I did not video record the dance. The student was engaged in the tasks and the interview was completed in less than one hour. She experienced it as interesting and said that the tasks were

not too difficult or too many. Listening to the interview and reading the transcript, I saw that the design was possible to use. I decided to keep the design as it was. I finally decided that the students who should take part needed to be 18 years old. I discussed with supervisors if this student should be included in the findings or not. The student had, two months earlier, finished a Waldorf school and got the same questions as the rest of the group regarding her willingness to participate. The student had completed the process as I intended to use it later. Our decision was to include this student in the project although the student was already 19 years old. I later video recorded her dance.

Here is a summary of the method.

1. The method is anchored on the act of doing, in practice—expressing the importance of the experience of the dance through dance, picture, and poem.
2. The method is anchored on the act of speaking—answering questions thus creating verbal interpretations of experienced meaning.
3. The method is anchored on the active comparison of artistic representations of students' experiences.
4. The method moves between artistic activities and verbal interpretation of the artworks in a circular way; it always return to the first experience.
5. The method includes different arts that give different perspectives on the experience.
6. The method is interpretative in its approach because it uses a process of varied forms of interpretation that aims at giving verbal form to experienced meanings. It constructs knowledge.
7. Participant validation is built into the method.

I compared the method to previous studies on dance (examples are Cancienne and Snowber, 2009; Stinson, 2004), dance in education (examples are Bond and Stinson, 2000/2001, 2007; Svendler Nielsen, 2009), and phenomenology and dance (examples are Sheets-Johnstone, 1999; Frichtel, 2012). I saw that the uniqueness of my method rests on the use of different artistic activities as expression of one experience and the intense interpretative process of the experience of these activities.

Context of Method

van Manen's work (1990, 2007) now became important. His methodological perspective is grounded on a hermeneutic phenomenological tradition. It is different from other hermeneutic phenomenological methods because it is focused on the sensitivity for action and discusses method in an educational context (Finlay, 2012). As discussed above, van Manen puts focus on the process of developing method more than finding a fixed method and applying it on specific situations. He argues that methods need to be 'discovered or invented as a response to the question at hand' (1990, p.29) and that the point of departure is 'in the situation' and in the 'meanings that are embedded in this situation' (1990, p.18). He thus focuses on the activity of the researcher and identifies different activities. In a dynamic interplay these activities support the researcher in developing inventiveness and stimulating insight for finding methods:

- '(1) turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world;*
- (2) investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;*
- (3) reflecting on the essential themes, which characterize the phenomenon;*
- (4) describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;*
- (5) maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the*

phenomenon;

(6) balancing the research context by considering parts and whole' (van Manen, 1990, p.30-31, italics in original).

The focus is here on the activity of the researcher. The aim of these activities is to uncover and describe 'the internal meaning structures of lived experience' (1990, p.10). Working with van Manen's perspective gave me confidence to continue the process I was in on the one hand and a context where I could place the thesis on the other. I deepened my reading of Gadamer (1993) and became aware of the close relationship between HP and my method. van Manen argues that practice comes first and theory comes later (2007). Through this perspective, I understood the problems I had experienced in my earlier search: the feeling that my own ideas were not good enough because they not were anchored on one theory. When developing a theory from the reflection on the lived experience, resisting temptations to develop 'categorical abstractions' of the results, and to 'refer questions of knowledge back to the life world' (van Manen, 1990, p.46) were perspectives resonating with my ideas. The strengths in these are a strong focus on the lived experience and the constant return to it. The demands are dependent on the researcher's ability to form new methods in dialogue with the lived experience and the ontological background. I became aware that my method requires a process where the students themselves do the interpretation of their lived experience. It is done a number of times and in a variety of ways. Students research their own experience through the constant return to the experience and the comparisons between representations. This method fits well into the HP context as described by van Manen:

'Phenomenology is, on the one hand, description of the lived-through experience, and on the other hand, description of meaning of the expressions of lived experience' (van Manen, 1990, p.25).

Procedures

Target Group, Age

The target group is students who during scheduled school time regularly have engaged in dance. They should be in the 12th class, thus aged 18 or over 18 years. I believe that the maturity pupils have at this age is important when they reflect about their experience in the way intended. Drawing on extensive data, Bond and Stinson (2000/2001, 2007) argue that students in upper school have a more developed ability to reflect on the experience of dance than younger students.

Schools

I chose to interview students from schools in Sweden with different profiles where dance was part of the regular curriculum. Dance is found in schools, following the general curriculum, offering dance within 'estetiska programmet' [aesthetical programme]. Within 'estetiska programmet', there are different options. Students can work with different arts, and during the three years of upper school, they are able to improve in the chosen art. I aimed at those doing dance. Within dance, there are different choices of direction. The students I have interviewed work with modern/new dance. According to one dance teacher who works with this direction of studies, the aims are to give an overview about dance techniques, especially modern techniques and to develop the expressive ability in dance of each student. Most of these pupils see their upper school training as a platform to continue into professional dance trainings. They want to become dancers.

The other schools were Waldorf schools. Waldorf schools are the only schools in Sweden where dance (eurythmy) lessons are part of the general curriculum from year one to year 12—one hour a week in lower classes and two hours a week from class 6. These students practice eurythmy as part of their weekly schoolwork. Eurythmy aims at developing the student's expressive abilities in movement. Here, the expression of perceived qualities of music and language is an important part of the style (Steiner, 1984, 1996). The interviews accordingly include students who are strongly committed to dance, those who see a professional future in this area, as well as students who dance on a regular basis without particular professional interest. In the following, I will use (D) for dance class and (W) for Waldorf class.

I contacted a dance teacher and gathered information on which schools in Sweden have a strong profile in dance. I carried out the same procedure with Waldorf schools. I then chose some schools and contacted the headmasters of these schools. I sent by mail a general description of who I am and my intentions with my research. To those who had shown interest, I sent, as a second step, the consent form the headmaster should sign. It included information on the research (see Appendix 1A). Upon receiving the signed consent forms from headmasters who gave their approval, I contacted teachers. I met with teachers and two of the headmasters and discussed how and when the project could be presented to the students. These meetings were encouraging. The teachers and headmasters were strongly engaged in research on the importance of the arts in school, and they welcomed that such research should be done in their school. In one school, with dance within 'estetisk inriktning', I got a positive answer and planned to come and do the

interviews, but at the very last moment, I got the message that it did not work. I contacted the first school with dance within 'estetisk inriktning' I visited and found additional students to interview.

Process of Selection

A short presentation of the study was given to the class. I, or the dance teacher, did the oral presentation using the information sheet I had written for the students to read. The students received the information found in Appendix 1 B. A criterion for participation was that the student had experiences with dance and that the student see dance as something important to her/him. A brief overview of the interview process was given, making clear that it included artistic activities in dance, picture, and poetry. The students were also informed about the estimated time of the interview and that the interviews were to be conducted after regular school time. After this presentation, students were asked if they had any question. If so, their questions were answered. The students were then asked if they wanted to participate. They either answered at that moment or later by contacting the teacher or me. I made further correspondences about schedules and venues mainly via email.

Participants

Twenty students: nine (D) and eleven (W) participated. The interviews were conducted during autumn 2012, from mid October to late November except for two (D) interviews that were made in January 2013. There were nine students from one state school and eleven students from three Waldorf schools while the number of students that agreed to participate was lower in each class in W schools.

Place for Interviews

Interviews were conducted in school after scheduled school time. The availability of rooms during the interviews affected where I could do the interviews. Most of the times, we used the dance/eurythmy room or a room with a space big enough to the dance.

Introduction and Ethical Protocol

Because the students who participated were 18 years old or older individual informed consent from them was needed (see Appendix 1B). On the first meeting, I thanked the student for her/his interest and willingness to participate. We had small talks to establish a positive mood. I was open and honest about the research and gave summarised information about the purpose and nature of the study. It was stressed that participation was voluntary and ethical issues were discussed in detail after the students had read the information sheet (see Appendix 1B). I separately presented and discussed the informed consent and confidentiality regarding the video recording of their dance. In the introduction, I explained that the artistic activities were not primarily to be seen as completed artworks but as an expression of their experience in different art forms. I explained the procedure and gave them paper, different kinds of colouring materials. I showed my iPhone, which was used to video record the dance, and the recorder. The student was given an opportunity to ask questions. All students signed the consent forms. I realised the value of this process: it cleared the air. It made us both concentrate. I stress that a high awareness of ethical perspectives of research is very important and clarifies the relation between researcher and participant.

After this, I asked the participants to recall a situation/situations when they had an experience/experiences of dance that was/were important to them, and to express it through dance. There were no restrictions or instructions given on how to perform the dance. The only comment I gave was that the dance did not need to be long or extensive or in any specific type/style. Any dance movement would do. This comment was made to emphasise that the focus should be on expressing the experience and not on creating a complete choreography. I also made it clear that it was up to them to decide whether to do the poem or the picture first and randomly mentioned the picture or poem first. Questions about how they should do the dance came up. I repeated that they should try to decide on this themselves and that there was no limitation or style to consider. It was obvious that they were not used to do these tasks. Their spontaneous comments showed that they were excited to do the tasks, but they were also somewhat hesitant if they would manage to do them. I then left the room while the students did the tasks, which took between 25–45 minutes. All students did all the tasks. They called on me, and I went back to the room. First, I chatted with them and asked if it was difficult or easy to do the tasks. Most of them answered that it was easier than they had thought and that it was a positive experience. No one said anything negative. I told them to submit the poems and the pictures and asked how their pictures were oriented. They then performed the dance, and I video filmed it. I asked them how often have they danced in and outside of school and which task did they do first, picture or poem. I asked them to read the poem. Then the following questions were asked.

Questions

- 1 Tell me about what you experienced when you did the movement.
- 2 Why is this experience important to you?
- 3 Is this experience important to your life?

- 4 Tell me about what you experienced when you did this picture/poem.
- 5 Why is this experience important to you?
- 6 Is this experience important to your life?

- 7 Tell me about what you experienced when you did the poem/picture.
- 8 Why is this experience important to you?
- 9 Is this experience important to your life?

- 10 Compare the picture and poem. Describe the differences and similarities.
What do they express?
- 11 Compare the gesture and picture. Describe the differences and similarities.
What do they express?
- 12 Compare the gesture and poem. Describe the differences and similarities.
What do they express?

- 13 Was the process of doing movement, making picture/poem, and discussing them important to you?
- 14 What does the picture/poem express?
- 15 What was the most important moment?

16 Do the movement again. Look at the picture and read the poem again, and if something new comes up, something you want to add, please do that.

Comments to the Procedure

The students sometimes gave an answer to questions 2 and 3 already when answering the first. I had an open attitude towards this and adjusted the questions accordingly. After the first three questions, the students became aware that the same questions were asked again. I had the feeling that this helped them to focus their answer and create links between their answers. Question 3, 6, and 9 sometimes needed an extra explanation. They asked 'What do you mean with life?' My answer was a variation of 'all situations outside of dance, such as in everyday life, in personal life, in school, in social life'. Question 15 sometimes needed comments, and I added the following questions if pupils asked for help to start: 'Did you experience something new?' and 'Was it easy or difficult to do this?' This made it easier for them to start their reflection on the process. However, I influenced their answer because of this. The aim was to create a process of interpretation of their experiences by moving between the different representations/situations in a playful way. So I did not put too much stress on each question. Obvious follow-up questions were made. If pupils were unsure or only provided quite simple answers, I tended to move on to the next question. The aim was to stay close to the interpretation of the experience of the artistic activity and to avoid too conceptual discussions and also to limit my influence on the process. Although sometimes, when the students did not answer I summarised what they had said to try to keep an open, relaxed dialogical nature of the interview. I had to contribute or talk a little because I wanted to keep the idea that we were having a relaxed conversation.

I used these comments as a break in the process, and I also often used them as a way to move to the next question. Most of the time, they only said yes to these comments, but sometimes they added something new. When the students interpreted their experiences, I became aware of the richness embodied in what they had created. I also saw that they did not fully understand what they were talking about. An incidental comment to a detail in a picture could lead to a reflection on a quite important perspective that was also new to them. It was tempting to focus on such answers and ask further questions. However, in order to stick to my intentions, I moved on to the next question. In a design with more time for each question, a more analytical approach to how they interpreted their picture/poem could have explored different aspects of the artworks much deeper.

I video recorded the dance in order to have a complete material of students' artistic expressions. In the beginning my idea was that I could use the video, picture and poem to interpret students' experiences of dance. In the process I soon became aware of the richness and authentic character of the students own interpretations and realised that my interpretations of individual art works would not add much. Therefore I decided not to interpret the art works. The interpretation I did was given in two poems that expressed my experience of students' interpretations. I did not show the video to the students because I thought it was better to leave the experience of dance as an experience of being *in* the activity, not looking at oneself dancing. I did this drawing on own experiences and experiences done in my teaching practice indicating that looking at oneself dancing can move attention away from the experience. No student asked for seeing the video. But, the video, picture and poem, together

with students' interpretations of the experience, afford a material that could be used to analyse how the experience is expressed in the different arts. In a future study it could be of interest to include the videos to see how they contribute to the interpretation of the experience.

In the original design, I had included a focus-group discussion after the interviews. I began to doubt the need for this after the pilot studies. The first interviews made it clear that what the students developed in the interview was quite individual and related to specific situations or experiences. It was intimate and personal experiences, like the reflections on their situation in life or how to deal with oneself. The interpretations of their experiences were rich, and I had the feeling that the students would not be so open in a discussion in a bigger group. As the aim was to stay close to the experience of doing the artistic expressions, the knowledge they developed is closely linked to that situation.

When I had preliminary findings, I met with two groups of students together with their teachers. Each of these two groups was consisted of seven students. I started the meeting by giving information on the preliminary findings. After this, I opened a discussion by asking them if they had comments on their experience of doing the interviews. Students expressed that they found the interview to be interesting and that it had been valuable to do it. Some questions about the findings were raised. In one of the groups, a question on why it is so difficult to express the importance of dance in meaningful words was discussed. In the other group, a discussion on the importance of dance as a subject in school started. Both these discussions developed into more general terms and did not come to a close. My reflections after these meetings were that the students had

confirmed that they found the experience of doing the interview as interesting and important. It was not possible to meet with all students, so, as I had promised, I informed the others via email about my preliminary findings.

Comments to Ethical Perspectives

Questions regarding autonomy, beneficence, and justice apply to all research (Beauchamps and Childress, 2001). Autonomy means that the students should feel free to take part in the study and free to say or do what they wanted and free to withdraw data. The talk I had with the two former students before the pilot study reminded me that I should be extra aware of the ethical aspect of asking the students to do artistic work to create a free space for them to do the activities. The talk also highlighted to act with tact when discussing their work. I took note of beneficence in my context by doing the interviews outside of school time so as not to interrupt the regular schoolwork. I was careful not to press students to answer questions. Sometimes I endured long waits. I argue that these situations are sensitive, and it is easy for the interviewer to violate the process by, for instance, staying too long on one question because of waiting for an answer. The design of the interview helped to move on to the next question and avoid such situations. In the whole process, I did not encounter any situation that violated the students. In Chapter 5, I will discuss how doing the interview benefitted the students. Beauchamp and Childress (2001, p.226) argue that justice is about 'fair, equitable and appropriate treatment'. This was met in the interview design. It is also important, in this respect, to reflect on biases and how to respond to the answers. Some students made me extra interested in what they said. However, I argue that to keep a tactful and interested distance to what they say and how they say it, is needed to treat

participants' contributions to research fairly and to treat the participants themselves equally. I was aware of this before starting the interviews and will comment on it in the following subsection.

Reflection on Process and Quality of the Study

Process

To go into an open process without defined methods makes the research process different from studies that clarify a theoretical position and method before designing the study (Lave, 2011). Lave's ethnographic studies became successful when she changed her approach from theory-driven questions to questions anchored on practice. The process that creates knowledge can, in this context, be seen as an apprenticeship (Lave, 2011) or as a craft where the aim is to refine something through a practice-based process (Sennet, 2009). Both my process as a researcher and the student's process can be seen in this perspective. In a practice-based process, the students and I have crafted and refined our meanings, our understanding of the experience. This places the researcher in a position of active participation because the researcher is part of the process, and it puts the attention on the relationship the researcher has with the research.

Maton (2003) argues that researchers in social research oversee the importance of their own relationship to the research. To bracket out oneself through a description of one's personal history is not enough. The personal history has to be related directly to what happens, to method, data collection, and analysis. Maton calls it 'enacted reflexivity' (2003, p.54). Reflexivity on its own can lead away from reality. Two extremes, according to Maton, are

'hermeneutic narcissism' and 'authorship denial'. The first exaggerates the importance of the researcher while the second withdraws and only reports the observed (2003, p.55). To stay in between these extremes, one needs direct contact with the activity of research and a clear account of the relationship of participant, researcher, and research. This is in accordance with Lave (2011) who argues that to put focus on relations is putting focus on what is real in social research. Drawing on Wacquant and Bourdieu, Kelly (2014) discusses comparative pedagogy analyses, the process of reflexivity by researchers, and explores three relations of importance: the objectifying relationship between researcher and object of research, the social relationship between researcher and knowledge under construction and the epistemic relation between the object of research and knowledge under construction. Reflecting on these perspectives demands more than autobiographical reflection and descriptions of the researcher's assumptions and values (Kelly, 2014). The main focus here is to relate oneself and one's actions to the different aspects of research. The researcher is not totally inside or outside of the process; rather, he/she is in a relationship with the process. I see these perspectives as important for my thesis and that they are valid both for my process and for the research process the students did. Thus, questions on validity as well as aspects on how different relations influenced the study will be discussed. The reflections on this are based on the practical situations I experienced. These descriptions might give the reader a fragmented impression because the purpose is not to conclude or theorize over the relations but the purpose is to point out different situations I found important to note. I will reflect on experienced biases and relation of the researcher, student, and research. The aim of the following part is to open up

different perspectives that I see valuable in understanding and validating my thesis. It is part of making the research transparent.

Bias

Gadamer (1993) argues that self-knowledge and reflection on how one's own values influence understanding in specific situations is a fundamental part of the research process. Focus should be put on the relationship between own meanings and the other meanings; therefore, meanings cannot be bracketed out beforehand. The openness of interpretation has to include 'our situating the other meaning in relation to the whole of our meanings or ourselves in relation to it' (Gadamer, 1993, p.268). This implies that the researcher should move back and forth between own assumptions and participant's experiences (Finlay, 2012). It is the intersubjective sphere of the researcher's experiences that give access to the experiences of others (Wertz, 2005). This process of using and restraining pre-understandings can be described as a dialogue, a movement between the positions that establish a relationship in a specific situation that results in a particular interpretation (Finlay, 2008). This is a complex dialogue between knower and known. To focus on these relations can help overcome bias (Halling, Leifer and Rowe, 2006). In HP, the research is driven by the constant return to the lived experience, and this movement constantly creates new relationships and possibilities to become aware of one's pre-understandings. This is part of a genuine openness in one's conversational relations with the phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). I experienced that this openness was influenced by different factors. I noted that I had a tendency to conceptualise findings. This became clear to me in the analysis of findings. In the process of identifying themes I, first went over the whole interview. Then, I

summarised my impressions by making a description of students' experiences. I consciously avoided marking or highlight words, quotes, or concepts because I experienced that this kind of reading made me focus more on content than on the meaning of the interview. I was aware that other hermeneutic phenomenologists recommend an analytic reading from early on in the process and to mark important statements (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004; Smith and Osborn, 2008). Still some quotes about freedom made me put too much attention on that perspective and made me overestimate the importance of freedom in the descriptions. One reason for this could be that I see it as an important part of the experience of dance. It could also be that I was influenced by research that argued that the feeling of freedom is an important part of the experience of dance (Bond and Stinson, 2000/2001). Another could be that some students made strong statements about freedom that impressed me. So, although I consciously tried to work in an open manner, constantly moving between part and whole, I still found myself focusing on particular concepts and statements, and this influenced my analysis. A particular meaning of freedom, relaxation, hope and my interpretation and validation of that meaning took over. I have earlier done phenomenological studies (Krantz, 2007) where I worked with finding the theme of a phenomenon through finding a word as a label for a complex set of experiences. This might be the reason for that I, in the beginning, was less aware of the activity that students described. Concepts draw meanings towards something abstract and this is the opposite of what I should try to create: condensed descriptions of the lived experience of an activity. The process made me aware of this bias.

van Manen (1990) argues that to identify a journalistic tendency in one's work is important. I experienced this, and at a phase of my work, I had a list of well-sounding statements that I found to really express the experience of doing dance. However, I realised that these statements might be impressive in a journalistic sense but lead away from the experience. A reading of the full transcripts and van Manen's advice made me aware of these mistakes. In the first presentation of the findings in Chapter 5, *Cluster of Voices*, I thus chose to present the voices of the students by identifying the first clear statement in the interview of their experience. This presentation includes both well-verbalised, open-ended statements and everyday statements to portray the voices of the students in a balanced way.

These reflections on my process made me see that descriptions on how to be in the movement or how to come into the movement are important. In these descriptions, qualities of the experience can be found. I noted that the process captured in the same word was different among students thus I found it necessary to come closer to the meanings described in the process. Gadamer (1993) discusses that the problem of describing the lived experience is found in the tension between new experiences and old words that we use when expressing the experiences. The values of each word affect our descriptions. I found this discussion important therefore I argue that it is important to not overestimate verbalised findings. The most important moment for me was when I compared my first drafts of the first descriptions with the final themes. It was a reminder that all interpretations are a part of the process. It was also a most exact way to reveal my biases. It made me aware of my tendency to over/underestimate themes. This was new for me. This understanding brought

me closer to the findings and made it possible to disregard my preferences and assumptions in an efficient way.

Relations

The search for a method, way of analysis, and context to contextualise the thesis in made me sensitive and aware that I had to position myself in relation to the research. I experienced that I created a form for something to happen and a form for an interpretation of what happened, a context. Later, in the process of the interview, I saw that most students took a clear position in relation to the research and the knowledge they developed. In their answers, some of them gradually began to argue a specific position. Mostly, this had to do with why dance is important for the student and could, during the interview, be expanded to include classmates and society. Some of these answers had a verbal form that is not always easy to include in a theme because their persuasive nature moves away from the description of the lived experience. One example is a situation when a student slightly bent forward towards me, looking me straight in the eyes. With somewhat raised voice, the student raised a specific position. I nodded and said: 'yes . . . yes'. These are examples of relations to research and relations between researcher and students. I argue that it is important to make this dimension of the research process to be transparent because it influences the process. In the following subsections, I will give examples of situations where different relations influence the process.

Relations between Researcher—Research

In Chapter 1, a presentation of my own preferences, assumptions, and expectations of the research was provided. The first interview made me both

surprised and perplexed. I had the feeling that the student only described processes, different ways of being in the movement. It made little sense. The second interview was clearer. The third interview was quite clear in its content, discussing everyday situations with a theme totally different from the first ones. I listened to the taped interviews and realised that I did not know what this was about and what to expect. So I decided to take an interested, listening position and waited with judgements about it. The following students described strong expressions of experiences I knew little about. So when the phase of the analysis of the findings came, my relationship to the research was such that I saw that the method worked well, but I had no clear expectation on what it would bring. It was like a new start. When I later began to see the meanings in the findings, I again was perplexed. In what context can the statement 'feeling at home' be placed? I became aware that the basic perspectives I had seen in the findings, such as 'being-in the movement' 'feeling at home' are found in the context of *Bildung*. The ontological underpinnings of this context widened the perspectives of the findings, and this context made it possible to discuss findings in an educational context. Through this, the relation to the research changed, and I identified my position, a non-essentialist position claiming that the arts are important in education using HP grounded in Gadamer's and Heidegger's ontology. This choice of context influenced my relation to the research. Looking at the research as a craft helped me understand the relation to the process that I was in.

The Student's Relation to Research

For the students, the interview was, primarily, a set of tasks. They did it out of interest. The process involved them in an expression and interpretation of their

own experience. The process was new to them. After the interview, many thanked me and said that they had found it most interesting. It was demanding to do. It opened up perspectives on themselves, dance, and life. One extreme example is H who could not find any answer to the first question. However, through the interview, H understood more and more what H had experienced, and, by the end of the interview, H was able to relate this experience to his present situation in life, which H now understood better than before. H also understood the importance of dance in a new way. All students went through a process, and the research did something to them; it was meaningful for them. Their evaluation of the process indicates that this was the case (see Chapter 5). The method activated them on different levels: artistic expression, interpretation of experiences, reflection, comparing experiences. Writing the poem was not easy for many of them. It was demanding, and they had to endure and try until they found a truthful description. The method made it possible to develop knowledge about themselves: why they dance and the importance of dance.

Relations between Student - Researcher

I learned that I could rely on the method and take the role of a positive listener that made the process move forward in a relaxed way. There were times when a student made a statement that impressed both of us. However, the development of such a theme is not always fruitful; it often leads away from the experience. This seems illogical, but, as I understand it, the power of a good verbal description that is acknowledged by someone who listens has its own social power. To feel content with a good sounding answer influence the process and in cases stopped the interpretation. Power relations were quite obvious also in other cases. Another example is a student with a low voice

saying something quite important. I sat silent because I found it most interesting and waited for more. But then, the student asked: Was this the right answer or? The research situation influences the students. They wanted to help, deliver good answers. This is something to be aware of.

The impressions the students made on the interviewer are important to consider. It is well known that the first impression one gets of a person tends to be transferred to other situations (Kahneman, 2011). In my memory, some situations stood out as especially interesting or especially boring. However, when analysing the situations, this has no relation to the content or expressed meanings. In one interview, a student impressed me. When I analysed this interview, I spent time trying to find what was so interesting. I did not see or hear it. However, I still carried this impression with me and searched to find something important, which probably led me to overestimate what the student said. I experienced the opposite case where I, from the start of the interview, found myself somewhat indifferent towards student F. F seemed to be confused, uncertain, always changing her mind. When analysing the interview sentence-by-sentence, I had to fight with the feeling that what F said was confused, but it was not confused at all. It was complicated and most interesting. This is an example of the importance of being aware of how easily one positions oneself, how assumptions and predilections influence the process (Finlay, 2008).

Rhetorical aspects of how students talked influenced my evaluation. Some students developed in persuasive ways a theme they argued for. I reacted positively to such statements and that made them develop their theme more. In

the pause after such statements, I could feel some silent confirmation or commitment to the theme between the student and myself. Looking at each other, both feeling yes, this is really important; this influenced me. It was part of the process to be especially aware of extra expressive statements (Lavery, 2003). However, I argue that it is as important to look at one's own reaction to such statements. These subjective reactions can make the researcher over- or underestimate the value of a statement. It can make participants over- or underestimate the importance of what they are saying. This is one reason why an interview that constantly returns to a reflection on a lived experience can avoid some of these influences. Being in a continuous interpretative process anchored on practice gives the opportunity to develop meanings that are authentic.

Validity and Reliability

Leavy (2009) compared methods used in ABR to traditional qualitative research. In the process of evaluation of qualitative research, an internal dialogue in the researcher must be enhanced (Leavy, 2009). Engagement and feelings are part of the project, and results are situated and contextual. This moves the evaluation's standards towards the authentic and 'vigour', and away from 'rigour' (Sinner *et al.*, 2006, p.1252). This move of focus is, in Leavy's (2009, p.256-257) analysis, described as a move from *reliability* in quantitative research to *transparency of process* in traditional qualitative research to *authenticity* in ABR. *Validity* in quantitative research corresponds to *interpretation* in qualitative research and *truthfulness* in ABR. I will therefore discuss some aspects on transparency of process and authenticity; interpretation and truthfulness.

Transparency of Process - Authenticity

Regarding transparency of process, I described above in detail how the method was developed and what are its aims. I also described the process of the students in detail. I thus argue that one part of the task making the process transparent is found in previous sections. In this section, focus will be put on authenticity. The method made the students come into a process that helped them to develop authentic knowledge about self and the motives for doing dance. The different activities helped the students to have new perspectives on themselves. First, the different arts open up different experiences. This task was new to the students. Second, the element of comparison of experiences in the different arts helped to verbalise the experiences. These activities made it possible to interpret the experience and find words that expressed what the students meant. Third, the review of the whole process helped the student identify and develop motives that are important to them. These different phases of the interview focuses on deepening the experience. The expressions originate in the experience, and few elements outside of the process influence the students. In the evaluation of the process, the students clearly state that the method helped them express and understand their experience. This substantiated the findings that are authentic expressions of the students' lived experience. Another perspective is how the students express their new knowledge, how it is spoken. It is often expressed in a searching, open mood, sometimes articulated as fragmented impressions, sometimes with surprise in the voice. I argue that this also gives evidence for authenticity. Such answers were not predetermined.

Interpretation – Truthfulness

The method used a variety of ways of interpreting the lived experience. By expressing it in the different arts, interpreting it in an interview, developing themes of importance during the interview, and verbalising the experience in a variety of ways, students interpreted and reinterpreted their experience. They created new meanings and interpreted these new meanings. The interpretations mostly dealt with one or two motives or a story related to the life of the student. The aim of the method is to develop interpretation. The method includes repeated cycles of analysis (Tenni, Smyth and Boucher, 2003). A constant participant evaluation of the findings is part of the method. It also includes moments of data saturation (Coffey, 1999) where the students realise that they have found a theme for their interpretation. It also includes the element of how autobiographic influences can be included and how episodic data can be transformed into a coherent description (Leavy, 2009). These elements are important when discussing truthfulness (Leavy, 2009). An important aspect of truthfulness is also that the students to a great extent themselves do the interpretations. In the analysis, I aimed to stay close to the descriptions of the students. The fact that the interpretations are strongly individually coloured, differing from another, and sometimes very detailed is an indication that they are authentic and truthful.

Limitations

The method focuses on interpretations of the experience of a dance movement that expresses why dance is important to the student. This makes it very specific. The students are all of the same age thus limiting the study. Given the participants' age, questions on identity and future life course are important

issues, and these issues influence the study. All participants had a relation with dance because they had experienced something important to them while doing dance. This makes them biased. The timeframe, in some cases, restricted the interview. Some students said, by end of the interview, that it would have been interesting to do the process again. The curiosity underlying such a statement reveals a trust in the process of creating meaning and that a further exploration is possible. This indicates that it would have been better to have a flexible timeframe. As discussed above, the researcher influenced the study both as interviewer and as an interpreter the findings. The analysis towards themes was awarding, but it also limited the view on the findings. Staying close to the verbal statements of the students in the analysis of findings revealed the experience in specific situations. It would have been possible to analyse findings using different lenses that would have opened up further perspectives on findings.

As a summary of my experiences in developing the method and conducting the research, I want to quote van Manen:

‘a good phenomenological description is collected by lived experience and recollects lived experience—is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience’ (1990, p.27).

Finlay argues that:

‘a phenomenological method is sound if it links appropriately to some philosophy or theory, and if its claims about method are justified and consistent’ (2012, p.19).

In this chapter, it was shown that the research question and method of the thesis both are close to the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of HP. The process of developing the method and the process of carrying out the interviews were made transparent. Claims about the method were justified

using different perspectives. Aspects on the process of analysis will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 - Findings

Introduction

The analysis of the findings is based on the transcripts of the interviews and the taped interviews. Interviews contain 30,137 words assigned to students and the total duration of the complete interviews was 610 minutes. All 20 students did a dance, a poem, and a picture. The dance is typically between 10–20 seconds in duration. In most cases, the dance has a clear start and ending. It does not consist of fragmented movements but whole sequences. See Appendix 2 for a description of a dance. The students use different words for their dance. W students use words such as eurythmy, dance, or movement. D students also use different words for the dance. In the presentation of findings, I kept the original wording. Because of this, some quotes can be identified as coming from W students. In the thesis, I use the words dance or dance movement.

The style of dance might affect experiences (Bradley and Wilson, 2002; Cann, 2003). Therefore, I found it important to include students from different dance styles with different levels of intensity in their work with dance. I analysed the findings searching for differences between D class and W class, but only small differences were found. One important factor to note is that in the method used, students focus and deepen their individual relation to dance and their expression had improvisational character to it. This might reduce the effect of the different dance styles. Looking at the differences across all interviews suggests that all students have their own individual position, and they develop their own specific theme.

There are only female students in the D class while three male students participated in the W class. Because the males are so few, there would be little meaning in analysing the differences between genders. I use capital letters for the identification of students. Using numbers would give an impersonal touch that fits badly with the lively descriptions of the lived experiences. I tried to use fictive names but found it slightly confusing to elaborate on 20 names.

In HP, the analysis of results is made in the process of revealing the meanings hidden in a text or in statements about a lived experience (Laverty, 2003; Finlay, 2012). The basic notion is that lived experience cannot be explored in itself, but narratives of different kinds are needed to express it. Through a structural analysis of a text or a narrative, a widened understanding of the experience can be revealed. van Manen identifies the basic steps of the structural analysis. He describes them as activities to 'reflect on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon' and to 'describe the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting' (van Manen, 1990, p.30). The process suggested by van Manen is to read and re-read the transcripts of interviews and then to write what he calls the naïve description of the whole transcript. The naïve description tries to capture the fresh first impression of the transcript. The process of finding and validating the themes is, therefore, made in a constant comparison of the full transcript with the naïve descriptions. The aim of the analysis is to synthesise different statements into one consistent statement, a theme. van Manen understands a theme as:

'(1) Theme is the experience of focus, of meaning, of point...(2) Theme formulation is at best a simplification...(3) Themes are not objects one encounters at certain points or moments in the text. (4) Theme is the form of capturing the phenomenon one tries to understand' (1990, p.87, italics in original).

Finding themes is a way to grasp what 'renders this or that particular experience its special significance' (van Manen, 1990, p.32). A theme is developed by identifying statements that focus on specific meanings, presented as meaning units in the thesis. van Manen makes a distinction between incidental and essential themes. Not all meaning that is assigned to an experience is unique. It can be incidental. With essential he means:

'In determining the universal or essential quality of a theme our concern is to discover aspects or qualities that make a phenomenon what it is and without which the phenomenon could not be what it is' (van Manen, 1990, p.107).

In the process of identifying essential relationships and themes, he argues that one has to ask the question:

'Is this phenomenon still the same if we imaginatively change or delete this theme from the phenomenon?' (van Manen, 1990, p.107).

Using these ideas I identified themes. The process of validating themes also included that a colleague read all statements and check my interpretation. Comments from the colleague are included in the finalised versions of the themes. Some themes are closely related. A quote like this:

'Security and happiness, there I can be, I am simply myself in it. I can do what I want and then it makes me feel fine' (B).

can be placed in all of the first three themes I presented. I interpreted such statements into one theme resting on the reading of the full transcript. However, this indicates that the first three themes are closely related. They together covers about half of the answers to the first two questions. I have reduced the number of quotes on each theme to a maximum of 12 quotes because I wanted to reduce the word count and to focus the theme. So, I present statements; one phase of reduction and then the theme. I identified more themes than presented. Relying on the full interview, my naïve description, and the number of statements in one theme, I argue that the presented themes are the main

themes in the material. I find it important to present the statements because it makes the process of reduction transparent. Tendencies towards too much conceptualisation or idealisation of the findings can thus be identified.

Gadamer argues that lived experience is individually unique and not easy to express in words and, therefore, he saw poetic language as a way of expanding the expression of lived experience; 'poetic language enjoys a particular and unique relationship to truth' (Gadamer, 1986, p.105). Following Gadamer, van Manen directs the attention away from a conceptual understanding of lived experience and towards a poetic way of describing lived experience:

'So phenomenology, not unlike poetry, is a poetizing project; it tries an incantative, evocative speaking, a primal telling, wherein we aim to involve the voice in an original singing of the world' (1990, p.13).

Finlay (2012) highlights the importance of van Manen's approach to include a poetic dimension writing up phenomenological research. van Manen argues:

'not unlike the poet, the phenomenologist directs the gaze toward the regions where meaning originates, wells up, percolates through the porous membranes of past sedimentations - and then infuses us, permeates us infects us, touches us, stirs us, exercises a formative affect' (2007, p.12).

Inspired by this alternative way of exploring meaning, I will start with a more holistic presentation of the findings and end with my own poetic interpretation of them. I call the first presentation *Cluster of voices*. It contains one quote from each student. I structured them in a poetizing and dialogic manner. It gives an overview of the main themes in the findings. I argue that meeting the voices of the students in this form in the first presentation can make the readers aware of and reflect over perspectives in the material that they spontaneously responds to. This is followed by a presentation of the themes. The poems I wrote are my representation of the meanings I experienced expressed by the students. This is the poetic summary. Remember that the statements originate from situations

where the student tried to verbalise the experience. The language used is thus sometimes fragmented, sometimes not logical, and other times well formed. This means that language and grammar sometimes are very unclear. I did not correct this in the transcripts. In the translating, I stayed very close to the original words.

In the first subsection, the experiences of dance are presented. In the second subsection, answers to the question about the importance of these experiences to life are presented. In the third subsection, different aspects of the evaluation of the method are discussed. In the fourth, the theme *How to learn about yourself—another way of learning* is presented. In the fifth, a description of the process of three individual students is provided. And in the last subsection, findings are placed in a dialogue with perspectives on *Bildung*. In these two last subsections I want to offer alternative ways of presenting the findings.

The Experience of Dance

Cluster of Voices

First answer of all students to 'Tell me about what you experienced when you did the movement'

'When I dance I feel complete and dance has always been my refuge' (A).
'...one exists. It is not only school and work' (J).

'I experience such a freedom; it is like a whole world and everything around it' (I).

'All my feelings become so much stronger and so much bigger when I dance' (E).

'In eurythmy one can poise oneself with the help of one's limbs and come into a unity' (N).

'One comes back to oneself...the thoughts tend to fly away but one can always come back to a centre' (L).

'Security and happiness. I am simply myself in it. It is a state of mind I always can find, find it in myself, create in myself' (B).

'It feels good both in body and mind and it is pleasant to do it' (D).

'The movement comes from my body, it is like another way of thinking which I have to stimulate as much as my ordinary way of thinking' (F).

'One instantly feels that something happens, like something that is turned on and then the thoughts follow the body. When I shall feel how I feel, the body shows me what I feel' (S).

'It is fun to dance and it is pleasant and calm but at the same time always demanding and it is very much a mixture of everything' (T).

'It is an experience of freedom, one can do anything there are no limitations' (G).

'Freedom and that one is independent. One has a control over what one does that does not confine one' (C).

'Every time I have moved in dance or eurythmy it has been so that I forget everything and only feel this freedom' (O).

'In that movement I experience security' (P). 'When I dance I am most present' (K).

'One feels reverent, somehow' (M).

'It is good and one can get calm and concentrate oneself' (R).

'To express such a thing is in very strong contrast to everything else one does' (H).

'I think it is about to have courage to open up for things and not be totally in oneself' (Q).

Presentation of Themes

The answers to the questions: 'Tell me about what you experienced when you did the movement/picture/poem?' and 'Why is this experience important to you?' are presented below. The reason for combining the answers to these questions is that the answers tended to be so closely linked to each other that it sometimes was impossible to separate them. These answers are collected from the three different interpretations, dance, picture, and poem that the students made from their experience of dance.

Theme 1

Meaning units

'When I dance I feel like complete and dance has always been my refuge. It is my own and nobody can intrude on my dance and there is nobody that can influence why I dance. In this then the experience of being one with oneself, to be complete, can be found... it is authentic, it is true and genuine' (A).

'Yes, refuge' (F).

'Security and happiness, there I can be, I am simply myself in it. I can do what I want and then it makes me feel fine' (B).

'The movements ends with that one comes back to oneself, one finds something, one feels secure...so somewhere one always finds the way back to ones aim or what it is' (L).

'It is more to find the peace and concentration, to be able to focus on what I want here and now; exactly here and now... yes that one exists, it is not only school and work. What happens is from the chaotic to harmony and to find the way back home' (J).

'I find myself and to find myself means to me to be secure in myself. To collect security from outwards and then one focuses it in this centre, one finds oneself in all this security' (P).

'I experience security, it is extremely pleasant to do' (Q).

'It is pleasant to do it and then one can only think on the movement and not on something else, something difficult, but one is in it' (D).

'It feels like it is fine and one gets calm and can concentrate' (R).

'I must really be more focused on dance so I can understand what asset it is for me to be able to express myself and release myself from all sorts of things. Then one wants to put some pleasant music on and dance much more, like just more complete, it is so good... Complete, that is the core of it' (C).

'In fact I feel magnificent somehow, when I do it. I experienced what I told now: It is a tree that I have drawn, that stands magnificently and straight even when it blows. It is a little of that feeling I have...I experience some kind of reverence that one holds in the body that one easily loses in everyday life' (M).

'It feels very pleasant to do it, to do something only on your own, to be unique' (I).

Reduction

Students experience security in finding their way back to oneself, to rest in oneself, like coming home. The ability to rest in oneself makes them feel strong, complete, and unique. To be in the dance is like to be in a refuge.

Theme 1

Being in the dance makes the students feel secure, and they are able to rest in themselves. It makes them feel strong, complete, and authentic.

Theme 2

Meaning units

'I get very happy when I dance. It is then that I am most present' (K).

'One gets happy and it is peaceful and then it becomes love or one feels it somehow only inside oneself' (D).

'Happiness and security and it gives a calmness, but I cannot exactly explain why' (Q).

'I think it is fun, every time I do it I get satisfied and happy. It is a feeling of euphoria. I do it while I feel well when I do it and I want to do it' (S).

'Well, it is when I am mostly agitated and stressed over something then I can do this and then it finds the centre somehow and I can get calm and relaxed. Everything else that is tough disappears and one can somehow find new energy' (J).

'It feels well both in body and mind... When it feels so good as it does then one gets hope, one gets hope for, I do not know, the future or whatever. If something else is difficult it lifts you up' (D).

'Hope, joy and self-esteem' (L).

'I feel myself quite uncritical and not judging myself, while it does not feel like it is something conscious that I think, it is things that happen and I do not judge them and that is why I feel very comfortable there. Somehow there are no limitations' (F).

'I think that doing it is very wonderful, to be able to express what one wants in a totally different way than one normally does' (H).

'When one dances it feels much lighter, even with the breath' (O).

'It is the relaxation in eurythmy. It is like some kind of break. Yes it is like when one breathes, then one can let new things come in' (M).

'I feel well by doing it and it is wonderful to have eurythmy' (R).

'One feels so new in oneself, without boasting and think that I am so damned good, I am the best and so. It only feels good for my own sake' (C).

Reduction

Students feel well and experience happiness in doing the dance. They say that it is wonderful to do, and it relaxes them.

Theme 2

Dancing elicits positive feelings: feeling well, relaxation, happiness, and hope.

Theme 3

Meaning units

'Freedom and that one is independent, somehow. One is outside of everything else still at the same time in a room where one stands on a floor and one does something. One has a control over what one does that still does not close oneself in, it is a control that somehow is held back, something that takes one somewhere, it is a damned pleasant feeling' (C).

'When one is totally in the movement then it is somehow timeless, yes but it is this that has to do with freedom that one can let loose of everything and that one does not think so much on what happens outside, that time passes by, it is connected to this, one feels free...It is this I experience in my body. I get such a freedom' (I).

'When I do it I experience a freedom. I experience an ongoing work or something that goes on in the body something that spreads in the body, some kind of joy but it must still be determined or something that is urging, a feeling of freedom, one feels that one can do anything, there are no limitations, no stop' (G).

'It is freedom and to feel well in oneself and there I think dance can help a lot' (K).

'Every time I have moved in eurythmy or dance it has been so that I can forget everything and just feel this freedom. One can do what one knows, one has the possibility to do what one wants' (O).

'It is first when I share what I have that it is me, that maybe the most important thing is that between that I show it and that I feel it. There one is somehow free from both oneself and the others' (B).

'Yes, one is set free or it somehow becomes peace in oneself when one has stopped to dance' (E).

'I do not feel thrown out into nothing, it is not that kind of freedom or such that I fumble in nothing but it feels very concrete. It does not feel muddled to me it is just something my body does that I can experience somehow. It is different kinds of experiences that there are no real words for and it is like a condition, what happens in my body with different energies' (F).

'...liberating, something completely wonderful' (G).

Reduction

Students experience a feeling of freedom, independence. It is possible to do what one wants, to have control of what one does. It is a positive feeling.

Theme 3

Being in the dance makes the students experience freedom.

Theme 4

Meaning units

'I love to dance and I think it is great fun and to enjoy the dance I think develops me both when I dance and after I have danced' (T).

'I do not only do it while I have to, but because I experience why it is good and what it gives to me' (M).

'It is somehow a small chock of euphoria every time one does it. I never think it is boring to do it and in the end it feels like that one has got something out of it, always. It can be physical or mental' (S).

'That I dance makes me think extra every time I do it, maybe not consciously, but I always learn something of it even if I do the same dance all the time...What I feel is that I really, really have become stronger mentally since I started to dance' (T).

'It is something that is totally essential to me. I would not survive without it. I need to use my body and work physically with it in a way that is not like standing in a gym pulling weights... but I need to express myself with my body' (A).

'Without the dance the world becomes silent. One can dance ones way through things...if people cannot understand themselves and their bodies then everything becomes very strange and silent and impersonal' (K).

'in the movements it is so different from everything else one does. I think that one starts maybe to think on totally different things, such as life, new life, like an embryo in the womb, something that is more than riding the bike back home, deeper' (H).

'even if it is a predetermined movement that I myself have decided it feels like if it comes from another place than my head... it feels like it comes from my body and that it is another way of thinking that I have to stimulate as much as my ordinary way of thinking' (F).

'When I am in the head too much it is so difficult to make choices, that is why I have turned that off a little so the body can decide and then it ends up well. Then I also understand many other things, it can be small things that I have not thought of earlier. It can let loose much that I have been pondering on so it can be so that when I am allowed to move it only comes, tjong! tjong! It can be anything' (K).

'When I experienced this, it was then I began to think this way on everything else in life too ... one has to struggle and it is hard to think in that way' (L).

'I think it is much about life or on the whole much about what one does in life; to dare to have courage to open up for things and not be totally in oneself' (Q).

Reduction

Students experience that dance makes them change and develop. It is a very important activity in their life, and they learn different things about themselves.

They experience another way of thinking where the body leads. This opens up new perspectives in life.

Theme 4

The students experience that they develop as persons through dance. It makes them see new perspectives in life. Dance is another way of thinking.

Theme 5

Meaning units

'These strong feelings, I dance while I want to experience it. It is only then one can experience it, experience all feelings at the same time. But in fact it is not any of those feelings while it is so much more in so many ways and it becomes so much better in all ways. It becomes a feeling that one cannot experience anywhere else and it is like all feelings become one feeling that takes over and wants to get out, or how I shall express it, and it can only come out through dance' (E).

'For me it was so that it was enormous many feelings. I did not know if I was happy or sad or, like everything! It feels a little bit like that this is the aim, it is this I want, that is what I want to achieve' (L).

'For those who do not dance much it might be difficult to think that the feelings are most important' (T).

'Dance. I think red... is quite charged with emotion that is dance to me' (D).

'to feel something, there are a lot of feelings... the true experience of dance is intimacy' (A).

'It is more with oneself, how one works and space and body and feelings and such things, what one does not do when one has maths for example. It is more feelings and the point of departure is within oneself and one does something' (R).

'I do not know what happens but one gets more feelings in the body, more than if one should read a book, it feels like losing the breath' (S).

'Somehow I want to feel something when I do things, one wants to get a good experience, often one gets a good experience through dance. It is a way of expressing feelings and thoughts' (G).

'Well, first when one stands there one directly feels like something is turned on, something happens. Then the thoughts more follows the body than the body follows the thoughts, so when I try to feel how I feel, the body shows me what I feel and not the thoughts the body. Then it is somehow possible to reflect over what the body does' (S).

'For me dance is very much feelings so it is something that one cannot describe through anything else than a movement, it is another language. It is not possible to explain in words' (E).

Reduction

Feelings are important in dance. Feelings become stronger when one dances, and to experience them is a reason for dancing.

Theme 5

Dance elicits strong feelings. To experience feelings is an important part of dance.

Theme 6

Meaning units

'It is like to feel totally complete and at the same time totally lost, like if one is part of something big, one really feels magnificent, one is extremely big and extremely small at the same time. Like nothing and everything. Yes, something shifting. It is like a spectrum of colours and feelings' (A).

'It is both somehow concentrated but at the same time extremely spread out in all directions' (B).

'It is this calm and power at the same time' (R).

'It is pleasant and calm but at the same time, always challenging. It is very much a mixture of everything' (T).

'I experience this explosion of energy that again is concentrated' (F).

'But at the same time it is an explosion, it is no bad explosion but something that spreads in the body, there is a lightness somehow, yes it is both, two opposites' (G).

'I thought about the feeling I experienced, the pressure in the heart that is both comfortable and at the same time so unpleasant' (L).

'Tension and freedom, these are the two things I felt when I did it' (O).

'It is like if the opposites in each other create some kind of balance' (C).

'One works with ones own absolute opposites somehow. I work on my own will and my own counter will against my will, not what anybody else wants or what some other one not wants, but still it is something that contradicts itself. It is something I have decided that at the same time, I can almost get surprised over myself, while it feels quite indefinite when I experience it and still it is me myself that have decided it. It goes round all the time and it is this that is so difficult to make clear and to explain' (F).

Reduction

Students experience different polarities. Experiences are full of tensions that exist at the same time. This experience is dynamic, shifting and contains strong movement, but still, students experience it as balanced.

Theme 6

The experience of dance is built upon dynamic opposites that are active at the same time and interacting with each other.

Summary and Discussion of Themes

Six themes are identified.

- 1. Being in the dance makes the students feel secure, and they are able to rest in themselves. It makes them feel strong, complete, and authentic.*
- 2. Dancing elicits positive feelings: feeling well, relaxation, happiness, and hope.*
- 3. Being in the dance makes the students experience freedom.*
- 4. The students experience that they develop as persons through dance. It makes them see new perspectives in life. Dance is another way of thinking.*
- 5. Dance elicits strong feelings. To experience feelings is an important part of dance.*
- 6. The experience of dance is built upon dynamic opposites that are active at the same time and interacting with each other.*

As argued above, I see the first three themes as strongly related, and, in a further step of reduction, one could summarise them into one theme: *being in the dance give students experiences of security, freedom, feeling well, and completeness*. This theme is based on about half of all identified answers. The reading of the full transcripts also indicates that this theme can be seen as the basic finding. A theme that also is developed out of many statements is: *Students experience that they develop as persons through dance. It makes them see new perspectives in life. Dance is another way of thinking*. The two following themes rest on fewer statements. One highlights the importance of the feelings while the other describes the nature of the experience. This is typical. When students describe the state of mind when being in the dance, they argue that it is very different from everyday experiences. They experience being small

and big, totally focused and totally expanded all at the same time. In this state of mind, everything is possible. This analysis of the themes gives us four main themes:

- 1.*To be in the dance give students experiences of security, freedom, feeling well, and completeness.*
- 2.*Students experience that they develop as persons through dance. It makes them see new perspectives in life. Dance is another way of thinking.*
- 3.*Dance elicits strong feelings. Feelings are a very important part of dance.*
- 4.*The experience of dance is built upon opposites that are active at the same time and interacting with each other.*

This shows that in the experience of dance, the students have a refuge, and there, they feel secure, free, well, and complete. It is often described as something in opposition to ordinary life with its strains and demands. Dance is experienced as a counterforce to this, a possibility to be the one you really are. It is important that students stress that they have a way creating this other state of mind through dance. This is dynamic and built on opposites. It is a place where strong feelings are experienced. In the experiences, they learn new things, develop as human beings, and open up for a different kind of thinking.

Poetic Interpretation

Before I present my poetic interpretation, I will review van Manen's (1990) perspective on how to write a phenomenological text. His basic argument is that writing is to show something and at the same time exercise the ability to see something:

‘The phenomenological method consists of the ability, or rather the art of being sensitive—sensitive to the undertones of language, to the way

language speaks when it allows the things themselves to speak' (1990, p.111).

This means that not only concepts that describe objects or actions are important:

'The textual quality or form of our writing cannot quite be separated from the content of the text. Instead of committing the sin of "overwriting" it is sometimes more important to leave things unsaid. The text as a whole aims at a certain effect, and thus the silence of spaces is as important (speaks as loudly) as the words that we use to speak' (van Manen, 1990, p.112-113).

There is also meaning in the form or the rhetorical structure of a text, and thus a poetizing way of writing has greater possibilities to communicate meanings of lived experience. This is why he argues that phenomenological research is a poetizing activity:

'As in poetry, it is inappropriate to ask for a conclusion or a summary of a phenomenological study. To summarise a poem in order to present the result would destroy the result because the poem itself is the result. The poem is the thing' (van Manen, 1990, p.13).

Therefore, I leave the presentations of the themes like this, open for interpretation. The following poem is my attempt to express significant themes I heard in the poems the students wrote. The poems sometimes relate well to what the student said in the interview and what is captured in the themes. Sometimes a student chose one specific theme for the poem. Sometimes this is expressed in few words, and sometimes it is explored deeper. Three examples of the poems will be presented later in the section: *The Importance of the Process*. I wrote the poem after finalising the analysis of themes. I took no consideration of themes, but I looked at the full transcript and naïve description when I wanted to widen the context. Most importantly, I listened to the student's voice: how they read their poems, their engagement in what they said. I listened to expressed meanings, language, formal structure, and rhetorical structure as expressed in the written text as well as in the spoken version. This is the

background to my poem. It has been a process of writing and rewriting, a process of reflection, thoughtfulness, as well as an open creative process. It is my attempt to communicate meanings I see in and beyond the themes. It is not an attempt to a conclusion or a summary. It left many things out. It reveals how I experienced the poem at the time of its writing, in that situation and activity.

The experience of dance.

There is a place where I can be myself –
feeling free, happy and complete.
MY home.

I know the way to that place
I know the hindrances on the way to that place
I know the discomfort, the struggles to overcome – I know that they
are that way.

My home is not a place
it is IN
the flowing silence of time.

In the streaming river of silence
I lose myself and find myself - at the same time

I am one and full of nuances - at the same time
and
at the same time - I am extremely small and enormously big

... as the stormy winds of up and down sweep through my body and open up....

I can. HOPE. Just DO it.

The winds whispers with jerky voices;
'Do not forget to listen to Something
remember there is Something
...righthere'

IN

Right, left,
Embraced by safety and calm I decided to show Myself to You
suddenly ---- WE.
Left, right.

Take In; breathe, relax and feel free
BUT
Don't let the world become silent

Don't become silent

DANCE!!! - - - and continue the ever ongoing conversation with oneself; going around and around where decisions becomes undecided and one's will encounters one's counter-will and the heaviest, most impossible resistance can be transformed to a bubble of bubbling energy bubbling through one's body – bubbling feather light, high in the air

The heart is beating.

There is

Time

in MY place - - - safe and free...

The Importance of the Experience of Dance for Life

The next question was: 'Is this experience important to your life?' Sometimes students already answered this when they answered the first questions. They spontaneously expressed clear meanings about this. Even if they already had answered the question, I asked the question again. Some students had not thought about this earlier and needed some time to reflect on it. The question was posed three times, in the interpretation of the experience of dance, picture, and poem. The presentation includes *Cluster of Voices*, identified themes, and ends with my poetic interpretation. The first two themes covers most of the statements, around twenty statements to each, to serve as background to their meaning units. They are closely linked to one another. The other themes have around ten statements, which means that most of the statements are presented.

Cluster of voices

One answer from each student to: 'Is this experience important to your life?'

'Exactly this feeling I only get when I experience this, I do not know why it is so, but I always feel that I get extremely much hope then and this is naturally also part of the rest of life' (L).

'One has to be allowed to be in oneself, it is there, all this rush, bus timetables and rules and all this, year after year and then one has to somehow pave the way for one's own, to be able to survive' (K).

'One develops more endurance and at the same time one gets motivation...then it is always easier to find meaningfulness in things, to study and do much' (C).

'Not to give up, because even if it is very tough one does not give up and if one has succeeded to fight one's way thorough in dance then one knows one can fight for other things to... then one has this, I will not give up' (D).

'It is such a good method to work on everything that happens... like a refuge, to escape and work on things that happen through moving' (A).

'(the movement) helps to feel secure and safe in what one does...In any situation one may come into it is very important to be able to trust oneself even though it is very dark and cold around you one should be able to find this warm feeling of security' (P).

'It is like a refuge. I can go out of the other things when I go into this and in one way I think some things are worked through, although not fully conscious' (F).

'If one has felt such feelings then one is not so afraid to feel it in real life and this is healthy I believe' (E).

'It is a way to relax from everything else one does all the time' (H).

'If one really can come into it, one must be able to come into it, it influences, then when one goes out of it one is less strained' (I).

'I have something I think is fun and even if everything else is tough I know that I have the dance...the dance never lets me down' (T).

'One can concentrate oneself and become a unity with the help of one's limbs and one can show with the body what one thinks and intends, so it is a tool and this is obviously mirrored over to life' (N).

'I can transfer the feelings I get in dance to life, use it as a tool...for situations' (G).

'It is a good way to find an outlet for things and tell something' (R).

'It is some kind of break where one can let loose everything, one gets absorbed, in some way one cleans up somehow, prepares for something new, one can let new things come in' (M).

'when one dares to do this, it can be difficult, but it is like a striving and then one can receive more and it can create security' (Q).

'when it is so stressful, I somehow forget myself and how I feel...I find back to, to experience that feeling that it is not only the productive, but I am in fact, the one I am' (J).

'Sure it helps when I go through something difficult or am under stress before a test or something then I know it is not the end of the world because even if I do not do well I can feel well' (B).

'One needs the driving force in life, there are lots of problems that stops man to do something and nobody asks what oneself wants in life and it is the driving force that gets this out, this; No! Now I want to do what I myself want' (O).

'I must really say that life outside becomes easier for me while I know that I always will have the dance. It is a secure centre' (S).

Presentation of Themes

Theme 1

Meaning units

'It is a state of mind I can find in myself. I do not rely on anything else, so I can always feel secure and happy while I can create it myself...it helps when I go through something difficult or am under stress before a test or something then I know it is not the end of the world because even if I do not do well I can feel well.' (B).

'It is difficult to separate while life outside circulates into the dance somehow. I must really say that life outside becomes easier for me while I know that I always will have dance. It is a secure centre' (S).

'I have something I think is fun and even if everything else is tough I know that I have the dance, the dance never lets me down... I then get the courage to do more' (T).

'When one is so blind as I am sometimes, when it is so stressful, I somehow forget myself and how I feel. And I must not only be aware of everything I must do...it is this I find back to, to experience that feeling that it is not only the productive, but I am in fact, the one I am' (J).

'One always carries it with oneself. One always has to feel like home, somehow' (L).

'I have found myself as a human being and developed very much through dance' (A).

'(the movement) helps to feel secure and safe in what one does... It is important to have security. In any situation one may come into it is very important to be able to trust oneself even though it is very dark and cold around you one should be able to find this warm feeling of security' (P).

'then when one dares to do this, it can be difficult, but it is like a striving and then one can receive more and it can create security' (Q).

'some kind of calm in the situations. I never experience that it is totally hopeless and even if it in a situation feels like this will never work, it is not this total, it does not work ... it works anyway' (F).

'It is a feeling one carries with oneself all the time, to stand straight even if it blows around you' (M).

'It is important while then I know where I am. I am not up in heavens and roam but then I am with both feet on the ground' (N).

'One has to be allowed to be in oneself, it is there, all this rush, bus timetables and rules and all this, year after year and then one has to somehow pave the way for one's own, to be able to survive' (K).

'One feels more unified as person and at the same time somehow full of nuances and one gets a bigger understanding for what one can do' (C).

Reduction

The students argue that dancing makes them more secure and stable in life.

They create this state of mind themselves. This makes them find and trust themselves in life and experience unity—to be the one you are. Experiencing

this 'home' help them to overcome difficult situations in life such as struggle with strains and other demands.

Theme 1

Dancing creates a secure centre, 'a home', for the students. This makes them feel secure in difficult situations in life. Experiences in dance give them a wider understanding of what they can do in life and how to find their own way through life.

Theme 2

Meaning units

'You think, you focus on something else but it is anyway so, you know, what you try to escape from is worked on in the movements, in what one feels and as expression in a choreography. It is such a good method to work on everything that happens... like a refuge, to escape and work on things that happen through moving' (A).

'It is like a refuge. I can go out of the other things when I go into this and in one way I think some things are worked through, although not fully conscious. I experience very clearly that I feel well but I do not know exactly the direct link' (F).

'I try to leave out life when I dance while it not shall have any influence on the dance but on the other hand... if something in life is problematic then it is good to have dance as a means to try to get rid of that feeling or to calm down the body' (G).

'The difficult things are not so difficult, they are easier to overcome with the help of my ability to express myself...If one has felt such feelings then one is not so afraid to feel them in real life and this is healthy I believe...The strong feelings, that is why I dance, it is only then I can feel it. I think that feelings are what life is and if you cannot feel so much it is boring... I think dance can make you a happier person while you do not leave a lot of things within you' (E).

'One must be able to feel if one shall learn something' (R).

'One feels fine and get oneself sorted out ...one learns to know one's body and that is extremely important' (K).

'Whatever happens in life I work on it in dance, one goes in and cleans up' (S).

'(Dance) is both something powerful and light and this is something that can be useful in life, a power to something in situations in life and one can also choose to have the lightness, but I do not know how. I can transfer the feelings I get in dance to life... use it as a tool or what one should say, for situations' (G).

'I experience that I want to define what I think and what I want and at the same time I think and want something else... and all the time in life it is some kind of discussion with myself and my own opinions...this I experience strongly in the movement, that the body expresses this' (F).

'While dance has to do with feelings...one learns about oneself and how one works and this helps the other things in life, to get away sometimes then it is

easier to do other things...It gives meaning to everything. It is something that sustains one that is fun and then it is a passion, one loves it' (D).
'It is like a form of real life, things in real life' (Q).

Reduction

In dance, the students experience that they work on themselves, learn about themselves. Through dance, they change, transform themselves and solve problems in life. How this happens is not exactly known. To experience strong feelings in dance prepares them for life.

Theme 2

In dance, the students experience that they work on themselves and solve problems and questions in real life. They learn to handle situations and feelings in a way that can be useful for them in life.

Theme 3

Meaning units

'One needs the driving force in life, there are lots of problems that stops man to do something, one should do this and that and nobody asks what oneself wants in life and it is the driving force that gets this out this No! Now I want to do what I myself want...this driving force is released, one can feel it better' (O).

'It is a striving...I am striving in life also. In dance I can find it momentarily, one can find it much better and in that respect we show that dance is not detached from my life...one meets misfortune both in life and dance but if one continues, stand there, what one has to do in dance all the time...then one develops very much' (C).

'Not to give up because even if it is very tough one does not give up and if one has succeeded to fight ones way thorough in dance then one knows one can fight for other things to...then one has this, I will not give up' (D).

'I always feel that I get extremely much hope then and this is naturally also part of the rest of life' (L).

'To work with things that one fails to do lots of times and then one succeeds; there are so many situations one should be able to handle, to push oneself when one only want to hide away and still stand there and dance and do one's best. I have learned very much' (A).

'A strength is needed to find security...to be able to stand up for something' (P).

'One gets energy of it. It is easier to sit down afterwards and do other things. It is easier to concentrate on other things' (I).

'To be concrete it helps me in school very much, concentration and such things...to move a little in the morning makes it much easier to keep concentration and motivate me for other things' (F).

'To find concentration...to be able to focus on what I want here and now' (J).

'One develops more endurance and at the same time one gets motivation...it is for one's own sake not only for endurance, then it is always easier to find meaningfulness in things, to study and do much' (C).

'Eurythmy is good for me personally while it makes me focused so I experience that I am in my body. I feel with movements I do with my arms. I think this is very important for the ability to concentrate. The ability to concentrate becomes much more mature and one also develops self-discipline' (N).

Reduction

Dance makes the students experience and develop 'the driving force'. Dance gives them endurance, and this is a useful ability in life. They experience that they develop through this. Dancing helps them develop concentration and find motivation to do other things. It develops self-discipline.

Theme 3

Dance strengthens the endurance of the students and gives them the power and motivation to fight for things in life. Dance enhances their ability to concentrate on other things in life.

Theme 4

Meaning units

'It always makes me feel calm irrespective of what it is' (J).

'One gets into a calmer mood and that is a very pleasant feeling both when doing it and directly afterwards. It is a way to relax from everything else one does all the time' (H).

'When one does it then one is in the present moment and this feels very good ... yes it is important otherwise, not always to have a lot of things in one's mind but sometimes just be able to relax' (D).

'When one has danced one gets calmer in some way...dance is a way to release feelings you build up within you...I think dance can make you a happier person while you do not leave a lot of things within you' (E).

'If one really can come into it, one must be able to come into it, it influences, then when one goes out of it one is less strained' (I).

'When one has danced one gets calmer in some way' (E).

'Dance is a tool to create joy and a way to handle life in general. It is not for nothing that people go out every weekend to dance to music. It is a very big pleasure for everybody and I really do not think that it is a coincidence that it is so. It is a release... new ways, all possibilities ... dance also has a purpose, one develops, all the time, as person and learns new things' (C).

'It is some kind of break where one can let loose everything, one becomes absorbed in some way... one cleans up somehow, prepare for something new, one can let new things come in' (M).

'It is so different from everything else one does... I think that one maybe begin to think on quite other things' (H).

Reduction

Being in the dance creates calmness, makes it possible to relax and leave other things behind. Dance makes the students see new possibilities in life, to think new thoughts.

Theme 4

Being in the dance makes the students calm and less strained in life. Dance can prepare the students for new possibilities in life.

Summary and Discussion of Themes

Four themes were identified.

1. *Dancing creates a secure centre, 'a home', for the students. This makes them feel secure in difficult situations in life. Experiences in dance give them a wider understanding of what they can do in life and how to find their own way through life.*
2. *In dance, the students experience that they work on themselves and solve problems and questions in real life. They learn to handle situations and feelings in a way that can be useful for them in life.*
3. *Dance strengthens the endurance of the students and gives them the power and motivation to fight for things in life. Dance enhances their ability to concentrate on other things in life.*
4. *Being in the dance makes the students calm and less strained in life. Dance can prepare the students for new possibilities in life.*

The reading of the transcripts indicates that themes are related one to another. One could question the difference between themes 1 and 4. Both themes

highlight the importance of the experience of being in the movement. The first theme uses words such as secure centre, a home. In theme 4, the feeling of being in that centre is more focused; to feel calm, relaxed. This is described in opposition to ordinary life with stress and strains. The full transcripts show that both experiences open up a possibility to see new perspectives in life and how to find one's own way in life. Theme 2 focuses on the experience of a personal transformation that is meaningful in life. Different examples are given: problems in real life are worked upon, the way feelings are experienced and handled in dance is helpful in real life, one can transfer the experiences in dance and use them in real life, and it is a way to reflect on oneself. The students clearly expresses that these experiences are important for them and in life, but as to how this happens is unclear. It is experienced as an unconscious or half-conscious process. So the students claims that dance influences life, but how seems difficult to define. Theme 3 describes that the students experience that dancing give them more endurance and motivation to do things in life. This is mostly expressed in a straightforward way. That dance made it possible to find and develop the striving force and the ability to not give up. The students experiences that this creates strength in them, a motivation for other things in life. The ability to focus, to concentrate is enhanced and developed through dance and, this is useful in life. Some students give clear answers about the link between dance and the ability to concentrate and have motivation for other things in life. The findings show that this can be experienced as both a general capacity in life, and in relation to specific cases. Examples of a specific relation are statements by F and M who both agree that moving a little bit every morning makes it easier to keep concentration and motivation for schoolwork. As argued above, the themes reveal different aspects of the same experience and

they are related. This is also the case when comparing the themes from the earlier questions with these themes. I list below the answers to the first two questions (in bold face) and the answers on importance in life.

Being in the dance makes the students feel secure, and they are able to rest in themselves. It makes them feel strong, complete, and authentic.

Dancing creates a secure centre, 'a home', for students. This makes them feel secure in difficult situations in life. Experiences in dance give them a wider understanding of what they can do in life and how to find their own way through life.

Dance elicits positive feelings: feeling well, relaxation, happiness, and hope.

Being in the dance makes students calm and less strained in life. Dance can prepare the students for new possibilities in life.

The students experience that they develop as persons through dance. It makes them see new perspectives in life. Dance is another way of thinking.

In dance, the students experience that they work on themselves and solve problems and questions in real life. They experience and learn to handle situations and feelings in a way that can be useful for them in life. Dance can prepare the students for new horizons in life and make them think new thoughts.

These themes are the main themes. The theme ***Being in the dance makes the students experience freedom*** has no direct counterpart in the themes on the importance for life. But statements in the theme: *Dance strengthens the*

endurance of the students and gives them the power and motivation to fight for things in life. Dance enhance their ability to concentrate on other things in life, are related to statements on freedom. The themes ***Dancing elicits strong feelings, To experience feelings is an important part of dance*** and ***The experience of dance is built upon dynamic opposites that are active at the same time and interacting with each other*** have no counterpart. They deal more with the nature of the experience in itself.

The comparisons show the close link between what students experience in dance and how they evaluate the importance of it to life. A main theme is that experiences in dance make them feel secure and feel at home in themselves and in life. This is linked to an increased ability to handle difficult situations in life and work on problematic things in life through dancing. One should note that these answers are influenced by the fact that the students were asked about the importance of the experience with dance to their life.

It can be seen that no negative experiences are reported. Students discuss the hard work or the strain and problems they experience in life in negative terms, but those are not linked to the experience of dance. Some of the students report negative experiences, but those are related to specific situations in the school. One example is that other students with negative attitude towards dance affect lessons; then the student found it more difficult to get into the dance. It must also be remembered that the students all volunteered on the conditions that they had experienced something important related to dance. These experiences were positive. My poetic interpretation based on the poems follows.

Poetic Interpretation

Life and dance - dance in life

Strains, demands,
you must (*check*), you should (*be updated*), you have to (*check it again*)
DO this

this and that and that and this and this and that again and again and

to pave one's own way in life without a secure centre where life is intense is

DIFFICULT.

Dance - to handle oneself, to handle situations, to handle the surprisingly unknown,

It feels like I have solved it, but how? - the dance knows.

How can I find meaning in all this? - the dance knows.

I really found out – but how? - the dance knows.

B

U

T

How can the dance know?

I don't know.

I only know that IT happens.

I only know that the dance never lets me down. It lets loose, it cleans up, it prepares for new things to come in - fun - freedom - change - hard work - hope - energy - concentration - motivation - feeling secure.

I don't know.

B

U

T

What is secure in life?

How does that look? Is it big or small? What colours can it have?

I don't know.

B

U

T

I know I can find it within me,

if

I search,

if

I pave my way towards it,

If

I find my driving force,

there,

YES, there IT is to be

found,

somewhere...There...IN the dance...IN My life...there...Somewhere...

Evaluation of the Method

This subsection presents answers to questions that the students evaluated in the method. The first question focuses on the importance of the process. This question had the same approach as the previous questions only that, with this version, I asked the students to reflect on the importance of the whole process, not just of parts. This question also includes experiences on reflecting and discussing experiences of the different artistic representations. The question was: 'Was the process of doing movement, making picture, and poem and discussing them important to you?'

Presentation of Themes

Theme 1

Meaning units

'It felt like this, YES, this is what I experience. I do not reflect very much over what I experience, I just experience it, but here it becomes like a reflection on the experience, something I seldom do and I really think that it became clearer somehow' (F).

'It was possible to put words and picture on what is happening, to interpret it. It became clearer what it is and what it does' (J).

'What I wanted became clearer and clearer the further I came. It became very much clearer' (B).

'When one has to put words on it, then it gets clearer. What it is that I really feel becomes clearer' (A).

'I saw it more clearly, it is possible to somehow think more about it...it feels like my aim became clearer, became more aim' (L).

'When we talk about this, to understand this then it becomes big...to understand and explain and maybe understand that it is very difficult to explain' (S).

'When I can write about it then it becomes, yes it feels like one understands, I understand more what I think or what I feel' (E).

'It is easier to understand it' (Q).

'I got very conscious about what it (the movement) did to me' (M).

'I have told what I can... it felt like if it was possible to explain' (R).

'This with the polarities and how one grabbles with oneself all the time this I experience very strongly and I do not think I have expressed this in words earlier' (F).

'It is when one describes and try to explain it...only then one can sort out all the feelings and thoughts on what one thinks about it, inside oneself' (T).

Reduction

The reflection on the experience makes it stronger and clearer.

Through the interpretation of the experience, one is able to understand the experience better.

Theme 1

Reflecting on the experience in this way makes the experience much clearer and gives a deepened understanding of it.

Theme 2

Meaning units

'It is unusual that we really explore what one feels. It was important to work this through in myself and even if one might think on this normally one never gets the time to think it through so much that one can express it in all these ways' (T).

'It made me think more about it and to get it out in picture and text, to express it in other ways than just go around and think about it all the time...I see it differently now, I get more pictures, perspectives on it when I show it and tell about it' (L).

'It obviously becomes stronger when one can express it in other ways' (M).

'To explain it with different types of expression. I think we need this to try to explain to people. One has to translate the language of dance to another language, verbal language, and absolutely this was a good way' (A).

'It is pleasant to try to express oneself through different expressions, that is picture and text, but with the same experience while then everything became stronger than it was before' (E).

'I think it is useful to try to express this feeling in words and try to understand what one experiences while one experiences it every day...it is fun to be able to define something like this' (S).

'It is pleasant when one can develop something one kept inside, it is pleasant to share it with someone and this is important for me' (O).

'It is good that I got more perspective on it. I did not reflect over this earlier but now I have done it' (I).

'It was real fun to do and a pleasant feeling' (C).

'One very seldom sits down and reflects over how one does things... but it is fun, I become focused as a person doing this' (B).

Reduction

Expressing the experience in different ways makes the experience stronger and easier to understand. It gives students widened perspectives about the experience. Doing the process is experienced as pleasant and useful.

Theme 2

Using different types of expression enhance the ability to explore and express the experience. Doing the process is experienced as pleasant and useful.

Theme 3

Meaning units

'It is very, very important not just to do it while one should, simply without knowing why one does it. It feels important to deepen why we do it and what I get out of it. I am digging in myself and experience what it is for me and this is the most important thing to carry with me' (M).

'If one really thinks about it and how important it is then one can find out why one does it' (D).

'Through understanding why one is doing it and why one likes it and what the meaning of it is then one can improve it... It is a help to understand why one is so passionate about it...When one knows why one does it one does not need to doubt it' (S).

'It feels more important to do it. I might have a bigger understanding of it' (I).

'I usually do not reflect over dance but I became very much aware of how it mirrors me as person...even more how much I like to dance' (C).

'It made me like dance even more, while I realised that I can get so much out of thinking on dance' (T).

'I could have great use of this while I know that it triggers my creativity in dance' (G).

Reduction

The process improved students' understanding of why dance is important to them. It is important to reflect on the experiences this way to have an understanding of the meaningfulness of dance. Reflection improves the meaning of dance to them as seen in an existential context.

Theme 3

The process makes the students deepen their understanding of why dance is important and meaningful to them. Reflecting on the experience this way deepens the understanding of the importance of dance.

Summary and Discussion of Themes

Three themes are identified.

- 1. Reflecting on the experience in this way makes the experience much clearer and give a deepened understanding of it.*
- 2. Using different types of expression enhance the ability to explore and express the experience. Doing the process is experienced as pleasant and useful.*
- 3. The process makes the students deepen their understanding of why dance is important and meaningful to them. Reflecting on the experience this way deepens the understanding of the importance of dance.*

These themes are strongly related one to another. Answers clearly show that the experienced processes of the students made them explore the experience of dance. The process enhanced their understanding of the experience in different ways: understanding the experience as such, understanding the meaning for themselves, understanding the meaning of dance, and understanding themselves. I argue that the findings show that using different artistic expressions in a research design helps to deepen the understanding of the student's lived experience.

The students expressed that they had a positive experience of the process. After the interview, when the tape recorder had been turned off, most students expressed that they found the process most interesting. Some students thanked me for giving them the opportunity to do it and said that doing such a process should be part of their education because it deepened their understanding of themselves and the importance of dance to them. Positive reflections regarding

the process should be seen in relation to the somewhat hesitant mood that most students expressed before the interview. I received no negative comment on the process.

In the following, answers to the other questions related to the method will be presented. The number of answers is much smaller compared to the previous questions. Answers will therefore be presented in a more summarised form consisting of quotes and/or summarised sentences that are very close to the original verbal expression.

Answers to the Question: What was the most important moment?

Answers to this question are often direct and not extensive. Therefore one answer per student is enough to cover the answers. Although the number of quotes is limited, it was possible to identify four themes. Five students focus on the process of explaining the experience:

'To be able to express the experience in words, to find the answer and get something released' (J).

'The most important for me was to show it and that I have explained it. It gives me more perspectives' (L).

'One talks and then one comes to think on things. I had the feeling of being able to do something' (O).

The most important for (S) is to understand and explain what happens to her in dance. The most important for (T) is to describe and explain what dance means for her; it gives her a clearer picture of dance and sorts out the feelings she had about it.

I summarise this as

The students found that it is most important to express, explain, and understand the experience.

Five students focus on the dance movement:

'The experience of the uniqueness of using the body as instrument' (G).

'Doing the movement' (H).

'Doing the movement' (R).

'What I experienced doing the movement' (I).

'Discovering the meaningfulness of the situation of performing' (B).

I summarise this as

The students found that it is most important to do and experience the movements in the dance.

Four quotes deal with the different ways of expression:

'All moments were important but it was most pleasant to do the picture, while it really expresses my feelings, for real' (D).

'It was pleasant to try different forms of expression, poem, and picture, of the same experience, while everything became much stronger than it was before' (E).

'Maybe the poem and now when we talk...I think it is fruitful that one needs to clarify and explain' (A).

When (Q) painted a specific colour, she said that her field of experience has expanded, and the importance of a specific aspect of her experience became clear.

I summarise this as

The students found that it is most important to do the picture/poem.

The important moments are spread over the different activities. One group of quotes include general statements on the importance of the process to express, explain, and understand the meaningfulness of the experience. To do the dance is important. The experience of the different forms of representations is described as helpful and strengthened their experience. These themes describe the activities, something the students did. These answers reflect the first two themes in the evaluation of the method: the importance of the process in making the experience much clearer and giving a deeper understanding of the

experience; and that the use of different types of expression enhances the ability of the students to explore and express the experience. Answers to this question thus substantiate the importance of theme 1 and 2 in the evaluation of the method.

Answers to the Question: 'What does the picture/poem express?'

This question was posed as a comparison of poem, picture, and dance. The students often hesitated before answering. Maybe they found it an unusual task. Obviously they needed time to actually do the process of comparison between their own artistic expressions. When the answers came, they surprised me because they were mostly quite short and straightforward. One quote/sentence from each student is presented. This covers most of the statements.

Answers to the question: 'What does the picture express?'

'The picture is more how I feel it, the experience, the colour is important' (A).

'The picture is the cosy, safe...more the feeling' (B).

'The picture describes the totality...it really expresses my feelings' (D).

'The picture, it was much feelings...it is possible to interpret it more than the text...it was the process' (E).

'The picture is more the feeling, lots of feelings, dynamic' (L).

'The picture gives me the feeling' (M).

'The picture; feelings, calmer, the driving force, the force of freedom' (O).

'It is easier to express oneself in the picture', colours...feeling' (P).

'The picture is a bigger experience, it tells more, colours are important. To draw the picture is more spontaneous feelings' (T).

I summarise this as

The picture expresses feelings

A second group of answers deals with dynamic processes:

'The picture is energy and colours...there are much warm colours while it is very sensual...in the picture the combat' (C).

'The image of what happens in my body with different energies....one does not think so much when one draws or I did not anyway' (F).

'In the picture the dynamics, colours...it sorts out' (G).

'The picture is playful', 'close to the movement' (K).

'The picture is dynamic, maybe a little bit more philosophical' (N).

'In the picture the negative is included...colours, explosiveness and calm' (R).

I summarise this as

The picture expresses energy; it is dynamic.

Other statements were:

'The picture is of importance for the ability to form experiences into words' (Q).

'In the picture one sees with one's eyes what happens, the light' (H).

'The picture is more limited, simpler in some way, one does not think so much when one does it' (I).

'The picture is much colour; one discovers what it is through putting on colour' (J).

'Shows the process' (S).

Many students said that the picture really expresses their feelings. They also said that the picture is dynamic. The pictures themselves give evidence that they are full of energy and dynamic (see Appendix 3 for examples). Some of them are very expressive while some are subtle. Some are more like a draft while others are well worked through. Some shows a process. Two pictures are figurative while some includes figurative motives, but most of them are abstract. The colours are important; some students even reflect on the relation between colours and feelings. Some students argue that it was easier to draw a picture than to write a poem and that the picture helps expressing experiences in words. The two summarised themes make clear what experience the picture expresses:

The picture expresses feelings. The picture expresses energy; it is dynamic.

Answers to the question: 'What does the poem express?'

More than half of all answers to this question cluster around one theme:

'The text is more like a reflection on the feeling, it really became clearer. It felt very concrete' (F).

'The poem is clearer in exactly what it is about...the poem calmer than the picture...with words one is limited to describe what it is about' (B).

'The text is an explanation; more intimate and body-based...it tells much but is difficult to make clear' (A).

'The text is the thoughts from the movement...things to think about...one comes to the solution' (O).

'The text understands more what it is about, not only feels, it becomes more objective, what one wants to express becomes more distinct' (Q).

'The text comes to the point about what I mean' (K).

'The text is more concrete, straightforward' (J).

'The text is straightforward' (N).

'The text explains' (R).

'The text is more what happens and the driving force. It is more power in it...My aim became clearer' (L).

'The text is reflection...describes more exact what happens' (S).

I summarise this as

The poem can explain and clarify what is meant. It is straightforward and concrete.

The other identified theme expresses experiences that are related to what happens within the student:

'The text is more able to look inside my head' (E).

'In the text, one deals with oneself' (C).

'When one writes it becomes deeper, one thinks it through and it is more authentic in relation to the experience' (T).

'The text is an image in words of what happens...it is easier to reflect when one has to take it in....one has to paint the picture in one's head' (H).

'In the poem it is more clarity or I understand myself, I understand what I mean. It is something that is within me and in the movement' (G).

'The poem is about what happens within one, the reason for doing eurythmy' (M).

I summarise this as

The poem expresses an inner, deeper level of understanding.

Other statements are:

'The text is experienced in the present moment, more like the movement' (D).

'The text is more extensive. It is more difficult to describe when using words' (I).

'The text is more complicated, difficult to express' (P).

The two summarised themes give a clear picture of what students' experience that the poem expresses:

The poem can explain and clarify what is meant. It is straightforward and concrete.

The poem expresses a deeper level of understanding.

Students said that the poem is the more objective expression. It explains what is really meant, and it is based on what is inside the student. It expresses a more transcendental dimension. The poem is helpful because one can reflect over oneself and the associated feelings. It makes students understand more precisely and on a deeper level what they have experienced. The exactness of the poem and the clarity it creates in the mind is opposed to the difficulties the students reports they experience finding the exact expression. It is obvious that the students are satisfied with that they could express the experience in a poem. That the process of finding words for the experience is important was also indicated in the answers to the process and the important moment as shown above. One of the poems is written in normal prose in three sentences. The rest of them are more or less structured. Some are imaginative and some are more reflective. Some focus on special moments while some focus on feelings and some give descriptive accounts of the process of experiencing the dance. Three examples are given below in the section, *The Importance of the Process* (see page 179).

The questions regarding the picture and poem were posed as part of the evaluation of the method. I was interested in what contribution the picture and poem could provide to the reflection on the experience. Sixteen students did picture first after the dance while the other four students did the poem after the dance. When comparing the answers about the picture and poem, it is obvious that the two had different functions in the students' understanding of their experience. The findings show that the different artistic activities give distinct contributions to this process. This substantiates the claim that poem and picture can be regarded as mediators in a process towards exploring different

perspectives of a lived experience. In Chapter 4, I discussed perspectives on this, and I will also discuss it in Chapter 6.

Answers to the Last Question

The last question refers back to the experience of dance. I told the student that we were almost finished, and only one thing was left to do: to do the dance and to look at the picture and poem again. I told them that if they experienced something new, they should add it. I tried to create a situation that was totally open, something extra. The content of the answers are included in the main analysis done above. Eleven students gave an answer that included something new. Two students experienced relaxation. One student gave a description of experiencing the dance. Another student reflected on how important dance is for her. Five students gave no answer. So more than half of the students experienced something new and some of these answers are of major importance for their understanding of the experience and themselves. This shows that their process was not yet finished and that it would have been possible to explore new dimensions of the experience. Some of these students said that it would have been interesting to try to do the dance again but that changed due to their new perspective about it. Doing the dance is the activity that seems to elicit new experiences the most. But this might reflect that they really did the dance and only looked at their picture and poem. So the findings from the evaluation of the method show that the students found the process helpful in many ways. The process gives the students a clearer and deeper understanding of their experience. The use of different expressions enhances their ability to explore and express the experience. Reflecting on the process in this way deepens students' understanding of why dance is important to both

general and personal contexts. The students have positive experiences with the process and argue that it is highly important for them to be able to describe, explain, express, and understand their experience. The findings clearly show that the different artistic activities give distinct contributions to this process of deepening the experience of dance.

How to Learn about Oneself—Another Way of Learning

The aim of the thesis is to explore students' experiences of dance in an educational context. At the centre of education we find an activity, learning. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, there are a variety of interpretations on what learning is and how learning can take place in different educative situations. The findings could, therefore, be used to interpret different positions in this discussion. I will discuss some of them in Chapter 6. But, here, as part of the findings, I want to present an educational lens articulated by the students themselves.

When analysing the interviews, I noted that some students used the word 'lära', (learn). I identified quotes where students used the concept *lära*, *lära sig* (learn, to learn). Synonyms to 'lära' are, for instance (translated to English), to experience and to understand. An analysis using these concepts would include very many statements. So in my analysis, I focused on statements that included the word 'lära' directly related to the statement or statements whose context gave an indication that the word could have been used. Examples are:

'While dance has to do with feelings . . . one learns about oneself and how one works and this helps the other things in life' (D).

'It is a release . . . new ways, all possibilities . . . dance also has a purpose, one develops all the time as person and learn new things' (C).

‘to find the centre, that is what I have learned in this’ (J).

I did the analysis and identified five themes. Two themes, *to learn about oneself* and *to learn how to find oneself* include two-thirds of the answers. The other themes: *learned to develop motivation and concentration*; *another way of learning* and *learned about things in life* have fewer quotes. These themes focus on that specific abilities are developed. *Another way of learning* is an important motif mentioned in many interviews but not under this label.

It is important to remember that the question, ‘What did you learn from the experience?’ was not asked. That means that these answers came spontaneously and are related to the student’s own idea about learning. I argue that these answers give an indication towards finding a way to explore a more general understanding of what they have learned in dance. These themes are highly consistent with all findings. The two most important: *to learn about oneself* and *to learn how to find oneself*, reflects the main finding of the thesis. They can be seen as a summary of the findings. The other three themes reflect other important aspects in all findings. One student put it this way:

‘It is a different type of lesson. One learns other things; one works more with oneself and the space and the body and feelings and such things. One does not do this in maths for example. It is more feelings and the point of departure is one oneself and one does something’ (R).

The Importance of the Process

The focus of the thesis is to explore if there are general trends on how the students experience the importance of the dance when they express their experience through dance. The identified themes open an understanding of these experiences. However, there are 20 unique stories behind these statements that could be told. They all differ from one another. This has two

sides: first, how themes are developed through the interview and second, how the student develops through the process. I have chosen to present perspectives collected from three students. Two are female and one is male. Two are W students and one is D student. They represent three different ways of learning about oneself and learning to find oneself. The main theme of the first student is how it is possible to overcome the strains and demands of school, work, and life and still create a free space within. The second student describes how she reflects on herself in a constant conversation that happens between her inner will and the body. The third uses an inner image of himself and his future as a point of departure. They are examples of three different ways of being and ways of relating to situations in life that clearly benefit from the experience of dance. I argue that this dimension gets lost in identifying themes while staying close to the verbal descriptions. To present results from this perspective gives the possibility to integrate the artworks into the context under discussion so that the reader can come closer to the sources of the material. However, first, I want to include some reflections that are important for the development of my own understanding of the process.

As I noted above, learning about oneself can occur even without the label learning being put on them. This is a basic perspective in phenomenology. Drawing on Dilthey, Merleau-Ponty and Gadamer, van Manen argues that phenomenology explores 'a certain way of being in the world', a significant whole that is temporal in its nature (1990, p.39). He therefore defines lived experience as:

'the breathing of meaning. In the flow of life, consciousness breathes meaning in a to and fro movement: a constant heaving between the inner and the outer' (van Manen, 1990, p.36).

Situations of being in constant movement between the inner and outer are described by many students and in a multitude of ways. It is an important part of the findings. To view lived experience this way focuses on how it is experienced rather than what is experienced. In every activity, one experiences oneself doing something, with consciousness, most of the time, directed towards what one does more than how one does it. Instrumental activity focuses on the aim of the movement. In the dance that the students performed, the aim took place within the expression of the dance itself.

The theme; *The experience of dance is built upon opposites that are active at the same time and interacting with each other*, highlights the significance of experiencing polarities. Reading the transcripts, I saw that what at first seemed to be an expression of experiencing bipolarity is also described as a process. The temporal nature of the experience seems to make it possible for different qualities to be integrated in and through one movement at the same moment. The interviews show that the students have an understanding of this and that their experiences are based on processes. This means that an answer to how they come to feel free, relaxed, or at home in the dance needs to include a perspective based on the process. To explain how this happens is not always easy. Many socio-cultural and situation-related factors and specific individual factors interact. Students' description of processes is often tightly related to some aspect of their life-world. I do not claim that I can present here a deeper analysis, but I will present the chosen examples to widen the perspective on this. What I saw was that the method used, especially the interpretations of the different artistic activities, open an understanding of this dimension.

J's Description

J gives a clear account that doing the dance makes her relax and helps her to focus. It makes her able to leave the stress of everyday life behind and fall asleep in the evening. In the interview, she describes that she had experienced really hard situations where demands and stress in school and life almost made her give up. The dance helps her to relax and to calm down. Her poem mirrors this:

Poem (my translation).

'From the very chaotic
to the most pleasant
yawn.

Harmony, calm and peace of mind
sweep over me.

The concentration that was lost,
has found its way back home
again' (J).

Words expressing temporality carry the poem: 'from . . . to', harmony... 'sweep over' and concentration has 'found' the way back home. Her picture is dramatic and colourful (see Appendix 3 A). In the interpretation of the picture, J discusses the strong tensions she experiences. She describes severe problems and stress in life (the black cloud). They attack, overwhelm her and make her lose herself, lose direction. They make it difficult for her to sleep at night. But the dance helps her find a centre. (The form of her movement was like the lying eight in the middle of the picture. The centre is where lines intersect.) Having found this inner centre, she is able to address these problematic feelings. Then, slowly, in a process of getting the feelings move through the centre, she describes how the bad feelings are strained away, and she experiences relaxation. This is represented by the stable red, yellow, greenish and blue ground in the picture. When explaining the picture, she arrives at a clear image

of the process she experienced. She discusses the importance of the dance using the image of a strain. When negative feelings come into the dance, it is possible for her to sort, strain, them out. It is not a laid-back relaxation that she talks about. She describes a process of high tension and that relaxation is something that is actively created through the process. It is part of the process, and it is in the process together with the negative feelings (black colour). It is a constant to-and-fro movement. It is a relaxation *in* the dance but surrounded by negative feelings. This is how she senses and makes meaning of *how* she came to the experience of relaxation. She states that dance helps her very much with her problems with sleeping and makes her able:

‘to focus on what I want here and now; exactly here and now . . . that one exists, it is not only school and work’ (J).

Other students express the awareness of hindrances, hindrances in oneself, and its different kinds. Demands and stress in school and society are experienced as hindrances *in* them. And like J, they describe that to be *in* the movement is the only place where they can overcome and address these hindrances. The students experience that they can create their free space and become calm. As J explains, there is often peace and calmness after or during an intense activity. So to attain relaxation one needs to be in a most active process. This is also crucial for understanding what they mean with freedom. Freedom is not only freedom *from* ordinary life; it is an activity resting *in* itself. This will be discussed in Chapter 6.

F's Description

The students give a variety of examples on how they experience the movement while doing it. Here, we will hear the voice of F reflecting on what she experienced.

Poem (my translation).

'Energy is released to be gathered.
A body leads and can, if it wants
influence thought.
Movement in air, in everything, in nothing but
in something.
Predetermined but indeterminate resistance
and lightness. Will and counter-will' (F).

This poem is about movement. It is about how movement moves and how that movement moves within polarities, opposing forces within oneself. It is about 'how to struggle' with oneself as F explains. This is the main theme through the whole of the interview:

'One works with one's own absolute opposites somehow. I work on my own will and my own counter will against my will, not what anybody else wants or what some other one not wants. However, still it is something that contradicts itself. It is something I have decided that at the same time, I can almost get surprised over myself, because when I experience it, it feels quite indefinite, and still it is me myself that have decided it. It goes around all the time and this is so difficult to make clear and to explain.'

'When I dance I do not experience that it is some sort of thinking or that I work on something but it feels like I do it. While it feels like I have solved something...it is some kind of discussion that happens somewhere else than in my head and that is why I cannot put it into words.'

This discussion includes both body and thinking:

'The movement comes from my body, it is like another way of thinking which I have to stimulate as much as my ordinary way of thinking.'

In life, she experiences:

'To experience the opposites in oneself and how you work on oneself in everyday life all the time...This with the polarities and how you struggle with oneself all the time, this I experience very strongly.'

The process on interpreting her experiences through the method used is valuable for F:

‘It felt like this, YES, this is what I experience. I do not reflect very much over what I experience, I just experience it, but here it becomes like a reflection on the experience, something I seldom do and I really think that it became clearer somehow.’

She is aware of her intentions but also of something that happens to the intentions when she moves—they change. She is aware of this change and sees it as an ongoing discussion with oneself moving from situation to situation. This discussion is not theoretical. She really encounters her own opinions in the movement. It is a form of thinking, but it is not thoughts, maybe feelings. She situates herself in this flow of experiences where she struggles with herself in a discussion that happens somewhere, and it ‘goes around all the time’. In this process, she experiences polarities that are integrated into the process; they elicit the process. On the other hand, she experiences this state of mind as ‘her refuge’; here, she felt ‘free’ and ‘comfortable’. It is a situation ‘without limits’. This brought calmness to life:

‘...some kind of calm in the situations. I never experience that it is totally hopeless and even if a situation feels like, this will never work...it is not this total, it does not work...it works anyway.’

She describes this state of mind as ‘breathing’ and discusses that these experiences made her much more concentrated and motivated to do schoolwork generally. Her last comment is that this made her very ‘awake’ to what happens in and around her. She gives expression to the experience when encountering oneself in constantly changing situations in order to be aware of herself and what surrounds her. Her last statement is:

‘I feel very awake and very open for what is all around...I am open for things that are in the air, there are so many things around me and I do not feel I have to take part in it, but I can do it if I want to, and I feel, yes awake.’

This is an expression of a situation of high sensitivity. She is open to herself and to her own will and feelings that are brought by the dance. She is also open to what surrounds her. Her comment, that she can take part in what surrounds her 'if I want to and feel' shows her awareness and sensitivity of herself and the surrounding *in* that situation. She can choose to relate to the experience or not. She is aware of possibilities. It is a situation where she feels free, calm, and comfortable. But to be 'awake' in the situations is a highly active situation that might seem far from the everyday meanings of calm and comfortable. In the process of the interview, she starts by describing the constant reflection on herself in and through the movement and how she struggles with herself and ends up with clear notion of how to 'be awake'; to be in oneself and to be in what is 'all around'. From different perspectives, she articulates this awareness of different ways of being in herself. In the reflections on the poem, she develops how she experiences this constant reflection on herself. Her comments on the picture are descriptive and close to the movement. They describe what happens in her body with different energies. She describes it as a 'breathing in and breathing out' (see the picture in Appendix 3 B).

N's Description

The focus in interviews and how the interview develops are different. Some students reflect on one or two themes that are repeated and seen from different perspectives. Others discuss different approaches. Some are quite clear and easy to understand. Some are difficult to understand, especially those of two students, H and N, who give an imaginary description of their experiences. These descriptions are partly difficult to place in a specific theme. Line-by-line reading falls short because what they say has symbolic characters. I will

present N who through the whole interview discusses different aspects of his experience 'to be under construction'. N describes how dance makes him reflect over his own existential situation. This is done using images that came up through the experience of the dance. In the first part of the interview, it was not clear what N was talking about, but later in the interview, he was able to articulate clearer what he experienced.

Poem (my translation).

A DREAM - (written with blue colour)
UNDER - (each letter has different colour)
CONSTRUCTION - (each letter has different colour)
- WORTH TO DIE FOR - (written with black colour)

This is an expression of how he experiences his recent existential situation. He almost knows what to do when school is finished, but he does not know how to do it exactly. The process of reflection and artistic activity through the interview clearly helps N to come to a deepened understanding of where he is now. His picture is symbolic (see Appendix 3 C). He explains that the flame in the middle of the picture is he himself. The dark structures are the problems almost pressing down on him that he has to overcome. It is something under construction with an open blue background and some disturbing forms. The main image is a lock. N, in the beginning, had no clear idea about what was the meaning of the key in the picture. He said that there is a key, 'there is a way out', but did not know exactly what it was. While doing the last task, he suddenly knew what was of importance of the key to him:

'I saw that there was a key to this and that it is not totally hopeless, the lock can be opened.'

Then, in the middle of a description of how he experienced the dance, his last words were:

'it is as if one has access to the key, but one only touches it while one is still not fully ready to open up; it is not fully ready while it is still under construction, this dream or this flame . . . one senses that it is not really the time yet; one is not fully prepared.'

The interview ended there. He now knows 'it is not really the time yet' that's why he has to wait. In this situation, he experiences himself and knows what to do. How he said this showed that this insight was new to him and of high importance. He seemed satisfied when he left.

The interview with H also had the same general development as with N. It started with quite imaginary and unclear descriptions and ended with a reflection on an existential situation and the insight that H has to wait. One interpretation of this is that the existential experience of being an 18 year old is being explored and deepened here. Being almost grown up, one might feel a pressure on oneself to make decisions soon. There is a tension between what is now and what will come, the future. Maybe that is why both use a more imaginary and expressionistic way of expression. They describe themselves being under construction and not being sure where to go. Both of these students, by end of the interview, said that they now know what to do—and that it is to wait, be open, and hope. The future will come and 'it will be bright' as N states. The process has made them aware of themselves, aware of how they exist at that moment, in that situation.

As end of this section, I include a short description of another kind of existential experience. After having done the last task, P said that she had nothing to add. But she stayed in the room, sitting silently. After a while, she hesitantly added in a surprised tone that she suddenly became aware of a gesture, a position, she normally sits in. She became aware of herself. This is another way of becoming

aware of one's way of being. This is an authentic experience of self that not can be captured in a theme.

There are 20 different stories to be told. All have their own colour and explore the student's way of being. I chose these examples and argue that they clearly show how these students develop knowledge of learning about themselves and how to find themselves. The examples also show that analysing the process of individual students gives a deeper understanding of the experience because interpretations are not only captured in one word or statement. The descriptions of the process that happen in experienced situations expand the conceptual frame. They create a wider context of interpretations and make it possible for the students to understand themselves in new ways. I argue that the method made this understanding possible, and I will discuss this in Chapter 6. Discussing phenomenological research in an educational perspective, van Manen argues that its ultimate aim is 'the fulfilment of our human nature: to become more fully who we are' (1990, p.12). I argue that the findings both presented as themes and as individual processes substantiate that the method made it possible to explore this dimension and that the experience of dance help students to become 'more fully who we are'.

Findings Presented in Dialogue with Perspectives on *Bildung*

In this subsection, the findings will be placed in a dialogue with other perspectives, mainly Gadamer's. I'll do this while I argue that this can give a widened understanding of the findings. As described in Chapters 3 and 4, my struggle with understanding the findings led me to an exploration of *Bildung* seen from an educational-artistic, practice-based perspective. As we saw in

Chapter 4, Gadamer exemplifies the ontological basis for HP by using a description of the performing arts. The voices of the students originate directly out of experiences in dance, a performing art. This part thus can be seen as a dialogue between the ontological underpinnings of the thesis and experiences of students. I find it fruitful to merge philosophical thoughts on the importance of artistic activity with practical interpretations of experiences of dance done in an educational context.

In Chapter 3, I discussed the importance of moving focus from pure philosophical reflection towards practice; the voices of the students are examples of what really happens when being in artistic practice. The following is part of this discussion. I will discuss this more in detail in the theoretical conclusion in Chapter 7. The dialogue consists of a few aspects. The purpose is to create a context in which the findings can be seen in new ways.

The ability to dwell in the artwork, to dwell in the experience of the artwork, and to dwell in the process of artistic activity is, for Gadamer, the basic quality in art. It is something we learn through art. Gadamer, by end of his book, *The relevance of the beautiful*, summarises his view on the importance of the arts:

‘in the experience of art we must learn how to dwell upon the work in a specific way. When we dwell upon the work, there is no tedium involved, for the longer we allow ourselves, the more it displays its manifold riches to us. The essence of our temporal experience of art is learning how to tarry in this way. And perhaps it is the only way that is granted to us finite beings to relate to what we call eternity’ (1986, p.45).

Gadamer (1986) describes that to learn to ‘dwell-in’ makes us able to come in dialogue with the art:

‘That “something can be held in our hesitant stay”- this is what art has always been and still is today’ (1986, p.53).

The students' voices:

'One is outside of everything else, still at the same time in a room where one stands on a floor and one does something. One has a control over what one does that still not closes oneself in, it is a control that somehow is held back, something that takes one somewhere, it is a damned pleasant feeling' (C).

'I am simply myself in it. It is a state of mind I always can find, find it in myself, create in myself' (B).

'I experience some kind of reverence that one holds in the body that one easily loses in everyday life' (M).

'It feels well both in body and mind. It is pleasant to do it and then one can only think on the movement and not on something else, something difficult, but one is in it' (D).

A number of students describe being in the dance as a refuge, an activity into which they can withdraw. The refuge is not a place. It is an activity:

'When I dance I feel complete and dance has always been my refuge...In this then the experience of being one with oneself, to be complete can be found...it is the authentic, it is true and genuine' (A).

'One always carries it with oneself. One always has to feel like home, somehow' (L).

'Well it is when I am very agitated and stressed over something then I can do this and then it finds the centre somehow and I can get calm and relaxed. Everything else that is tough disappears and one can somehow find new energy...What happens is from the chaotic to harmony and to find the way back home' (J).

Students emphasise that the basic thing when expressing oneself in dance is to come *in*, come *into*, the movement and then to rest, to stay, in the movement; to come 'back home' is the next step.

Gadamer's voice:

Gadamer (1993) discusses the theme of returning to oneself and he links it to Hegel's ideas of 'zu Hause sein' [to be at home], an activity that can overcome alienation. Gadamer argues against Hegel's view on *Bildung* as:

'a complete mastery of substance, in the dissolution of all concrete being,

reached only in the absolute knowledge of philosophy' (Gadamer, 1993, p.15).

Gadamer sees this idealistic way of describing *Bildung* as problematic and argues that it is a form of alienation. Gadamer instead draws the attention to another direction, towards the practical encounter with art as the activity where we can return to ourselves:

'Thus what constitutes the essence of Bildung is clearly not alienation as such, but the return to oneself - which presupposes alienation, to be sure' (1993, p.14).

Educationalist Wiercinski comments on this:

'When Gadamer uses the Hegelian word in-dwelling (*einhausen*) to describe education as an existential effort in making oneself at home in the world, he brings into discussion the whole tension between being at home and homelessness, between self possession and the uncertainty of understanding' (2012, p.116).

The students' voices:

'One comes back to oneself...the thoughts tend to fly away but one can always come back to a centre' (L).

'If one really can come into it, one must be able to come into it, it affects one, then when one goes out one is less strained' (I).

'I experience security, it is extremely pleasant to do' (Q).

'I do not feel thrown out into nothing, it is not that kind of freedom or such that I fumble in nothing but it feels very concrete. It does not feel muddled to me it is just something my body does that I can experience somehow. It is different kinds of experiences, which there are no real words for, and it is like a condition, what happens in my body with different energies' (F).

'(the dance) helps to feel secure and safe in what one does...It is important to have security. In any situation one may come into it is very important to be able to trust oneself even though it is very dark and cold around you one should be able to find this warm feeling of security' (P).

The phenomenologist Langeveld explored the fact that children seek out places where they feel secure and can withdraw from others. The mode of being there is the opposite of the active games with others. It is a place where the child just

can be, rest in itself, and Langeveld argues:

'the actual experience of the secret place is always grounded in a mood of tranquillity, peacefulness: it is a place where we can feel sheltered, safe and close to that with which we are intimate and deeply familiar' (Langeveld in van Manen, 2007, p.23).

Langeveld maintains that this experience of a secret place is a place of growth:

'during all stages leading to adulthood, the secret place remains an asylum in which the personality can mature; this self-creating process of standing apart from others, this experiment, this growing self-awareness, this creative peace and absolute intimacy demand it - for they are only possible in alone-ness' (Langeveld in van Manen, 2007, p.24).

Langeveld calls it 'my-own-ness' thus the child:

'encounters the world in a more addressable form—everything which can occur in this openness and in this availability, the child must actively fashion or at least actively allow as a possibility' (Langeveld in van Manen, 2007, p.24).

What is discussed here is that the basic ability to dwell in something, to be at home in something, is a fundament for the possibility to be open. It is a place of growth. Gadamer locates this place in the activity of the encounter with art. This can make us grow in this respect, and he links the ability to rest in oneself with the ability to be open towards life, to be tolerant:

'It is a widespread mistake to take tolerance to be a virtue which abandons insisting on one's own position and represents the other as equally valid... It is rather one's own strength, especially the strength of one's own existential certainty, which permits one to be tolerant' (Gadamer, 1992, p.206).

To be in the movement, to dance, elicits strong experiences of positive feelings as theme 2 shows: *students feel well and experience happiness by doing dance. They say that it is wonderful to do it, and it makes them feel relaxed.* The findings show that the list of these positive experiences is long and that the feeling of coming home, to be in oneself, is directly linked to positive experiences. Examples are:

'One gets happy and it is peaceful and then it becomes love or one feels it somehow only inside oneself' (D).

'Hope, joy and self-esteem' (L).

'It is freedom and to feel well in oneself and there I think dance can help a lot' (K).

Reading these positive statements may make one somewhat blind to what they really express. Broady was engaged in practice-based research and saw this problem. He argues that developing interpretative knowledge in education is best done having conflicting cases. His example is that one needs two wines to be able to make distinctive judgements on one of them (Broady, 1977). Schwartz, Bransford and Sears (2004) argue that using conflicting cases is an important part of a research design aiming at exploring values in an educational context. So to contrast the experiences of the students with a description of their opposites might refresh our view on them. I present here a list created by finding opposites to the words used in the themes.

Voice of the opposites:

Feeling:

Homeless and insecure,
Incomplete and disharmonious, not being able to rest in oneself,
Oppressed, under pressure and stressed,
Unmotivated and distracted,
Unhappy, hopeless, and cannot see new perspectives in life.

Does not know:

How to find out what to do in life,
How to work on oneself,
How to handle oneself,
How to find one's own way.

Experience:

Lack of endurance and concentration,
Lack of motivation and meaningfulness in life,
Lack of encounter with oneself and the body,
Weak and pale feelings.

Gadamer's voice:

Gadamer discusses time—'empty time' and 'fulfilled time' (1986, p.42). When dwelling in time, we can establish continuity with history and ourselves. To experience a drama is to take part in it, and this can deepen the spectator's 'continuity with himself' (1993, p.133). Gadamer conceptualises this continuity with oneself as 'contemporaneity' (1993, p.127), and it belongs to the being of the work of art. It constitutes the essence of a total presence in a process, in time. Included in it is also to be open, to be able to encounter many things at one moment. Gadamer argues that the general characteristic of *Bildung* is:

'keeping oneself open to what is other – to other, more universal points of view... Thus the cultivated consciousness has in fact more the character of a sense' (1993, p.17).

The students' voices:

'I feel very awake and very open for that what is all around... I am open for things that are in the air, there are so many things around me and I do not feel I have to take part in it but I can do it if I want to and I feel, yes awake' (F).

'When one is totally in the movement then it is somehow timeless, yes. But it is this that has to do with freedom that one can let loose of everything and that one does not think so much on what happens outside, that time passes by, it is connected to this, one feels free' (I).

'One feels more unified as person and at the same time somehow full of nuances and one gets a bigger understanding for what one can do' (C).

In this dialogue between Gadamer, other educational ideas, and the student's voices I wanted to open the discussion on the value of being able to dwell—in a process. This ability is at the very centre of HP. Heidegger (2010) captures it in the concept *Dasein*. The voices of the students make clear that the dance activity enhance this ability. I argue that this is a main finding of the thesis and concludes this part with two quotes.

Gadamer's voice from *Education as self-education* (2001, p.531):

‘...this process of feeling at home, which I cannot emphasise strongly enough as the key idea of any kind of education (*Erziehung*) or cultivation (*Bildung*).’

Voice of student K:

‘One has to be allowed to be in oneself, it is there, all this rush, bus timetables and rules and all this, year after year and then one has to somehow pave the way for one’s own, to be able to survive.’

Chapter 6 - Discussion of Findings

The findings are open for interpretation and different lenses could be used to widen the understanding of them. In this chapter, I discuss perspectives on method and findings that I find important to point out. Because method and findings are so intertwined, it is difficult to discuss them separately. Thus, some themes are discussed from both perspectives.

Method

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 4, the method rests on two robust methodological frameworks, HP and ABR. In ABR, a wide array of research projects has shown that activities in the arts can deepen and explore experience in different domains of life. In HP, methods have been developed to enhance the ability to interpret, verbalise, and analyse lived experience. Studies on dance using multimodal approaches showed that such methods provide multiple perspectives on experience (Svendler Nielsen, 2009). A dialogical approach where artists explore the contributions of experiences of different arts to an understanding of one theme developed new knowledge (Sava and Nuutinen, 2003). Sava and Nuutinen argue that a third space is established where interpretations meet and new meaning is created. The method adds to this by using different arts to explore the experience of one art, dance. The interpretative process is thus expanded and the students are able to establish a dialogue, a third space, in their interpretations of their artwork. In this dialogue, new meanings are created. The tasks in the method put the students in situations that move outside normal life. Thus, it can be argued that the method focuses on establishing experimental situations (van Manen, 1990) that are

interruptions of normal life (Biesta, 2012) and thus open for developing new perspectives on self.

This thesis emphasises the importance of interpretative activities in the encounter with dance and other arts. I have experienced situations in the teaching and practice of dance that were dominated by extreme instrumental approaches. I have also experienced situations where dance was used as mere self-expression, and, in dance, such expressions can be very strong. The interpretative position taken in this thesis differs from these. Its focus is on the exploration of the lived experience in the moment of expression and on the interpretative activities exploring the significance of dance.

Evaluation of Method

Three themes are identified in the evaluation of the method. In order to keep a direct relation to the findings, students' statements are included to each theme.

To reflect on the experience in this way makes the experience much clearer and give a deepened understanding of it.

'It became clearer what it is and what it does' (J).

'It is when one describes and tries to explain it . . . only then, one can sort out all the feelings and thoughts on what one thinks about it, inside oneself' (T).

To use different types of expression enhances the ability to explore and express the experience.

'It obviously becomes stronger when one can express it in other ways' (M).

'It is pleasant to try to express oneself through different expressions, picture, and text but with the same experience while then everything gets stronger than it was before' (E).

The process makes students deepen their understanding of why dance is important and meaningful for them. To reflect on the experience this way deepens the understanding of the importance of dance.

‘It is very, very important not just to do it while one should, simply without knowing why one does it. It feels important to deepen why we do it and what I get out of it. I am digging in myself and experience what it is for me and this is the most important thing to carry with me’ (M).

‘Through understanding why one is doing it and why one likes it and what the meaning of it is, then one can improve it . . . It is a help to understand why one is so passionate about it . . . When one knows why one does it, one does not need to doubt it’ (S).

The themes and these quotes substantiate that the students find that the method makes it possible to arrive at a deepened understanding of the lived experience of dance. An argument to consider is that many forms of interviews aim to develop and verbalise new understanding of a specific experience through a process that is more or less open and influenced by the situation (Kvale, 1983, 1996). Like most interviews, this interview is a process of getting a clearer and clearer picture of what is important. What stands out is that the findings show that the interpretation of the artistic activity is important, which confirms that when description is ‘mediated by expression’ it seems to contain a stronger element of interpretation’ (van Manen, 1990, p.25).

The evaluation indicates that the students, through the method, deepen their understanding of why dance is important and meaningful for them, and it deepens their understanding of themselves. This moves the perspective from developing deeper understanding of the experience towards ‘formative relations between being and acting, between who we are and how we act’ (van Manen, 2007, p.13). van Manen (2007) maintains that to explore these relations moves phenomenology away from theory towards practice. Practice, seen from this

perspective, is not only what I do or what happens but also what happens to me and what forms me when doing it. van Manen (2007) calls his approach a *phenomenology of practice*. Staying close to van Manen's perspectives, I argue that the method I used extends phenomenology of practice by including the artistic activity in the process of interpretation. The method thus can be named *phenomenology of artistic practice*. The evaluation of the method shows that the aims, to deepen the understanding of the experience and to develop the ability to verbalise it, are fulfilled. Findings show that the artistic activities are important in this process. In addition, findings substantiate that, through the method, the students identify formative relations between experiences and self, which makes it possible for them to understand their relation to dance.

Importance for the Students

Some months after the interviews, I met most students again in two separate group meetings. I asked how they had experienced the interview. The students gave positive comments and said that the interview had been valuable for them. In one group, a dance class, a discussion started with a question from a student. I only took notes at these talks, so the wording may not be exact:

‘Why is it so much easier for my friend who studies science to explain what it is she is learning and why she is doing it than for me to explain what dance is and why I am dancing?’ (A).

A most lively discussion started. Two major themes came up. First, dance is less valued in school and society than science. Second, when one dances, one has to fight for it. The conclusion of the talk was that it is very important to understand why one dances and to be able to explain it. Student A focuses on the high existential value of being able to understand and argue for why one is dancing. For 18-year-old students who look forward to a career in dance, that is

very important. The dance students are confronted with the cultural dismissal of dance and, in addition, the well-known difficulty in defining and explaining dance as discussed in Chapter 2. Thus it is an important task for schools to provide opportunities, especially for students in dance, to develop their own fully reflected arguments about why they are doing what they do. What is at stake here is the development of an understanding of the choice of a life course. In the discussion students argued that the method was helpful in developing a deeper understanding of why dance is important for them. The evaluation of the method also shows that the method help to explore this existential dimension. In adolescence, the understanding of self is a situation that is changing and demanding; it concerns issues in the identity of the young adult (Robins and Trzesniewski, 2005). Judgements to be made are embedded in situations of uncertainty, and the formulation of one's life course is the central issue (Marcia, 1980, 2010). What is at stake is the construction of a self-structure 'an internal self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history' (Marcia, 1980, p.159). I maintain that this method elicits a process that helps the students explore and develop a self-structure. Findings show that the students became aware of their own uniqueness, 'how they make their way in the world' (Marcia, 1980, p.159). The method makes it possible to approach the dynamic and continually shifting situations where identity is formed. Marcia argues that the most crucial area to study is 'the underlying process: the patterning of more or less disparate parts into a flexible unity' (1980, p.159). I argue that the method makes students conscious about this dimension. It makes the students able to create a wider context of experiences of self. This context makes it possible to find a pattern in the own way of being and perceive oneself as a flexible unity. I will discuss this perspective later, but here only

wanted to point out that the method made it possible to get access to, relate to, and form existential experiences. Students claim that the method helped to sort out and clarify their aims—why it is important for them to dance. The students who participated were 18 years old and one was 19 years old, so findings mirror both the existential situation they are in, their struggle to form their own identity as well as their experience of dance and the process the method elicited. Marcia (1980, 2010) argues that the basic experience of adolescence is instability, being insecure of identity and unsure of the direction to go to. Thus, the young ones are occupied by a struggle to learn to know, and to articulate their own identity. In this process, Marcia (1980, p.161) identifies four steps: 'identity achievement, foreclosure, identity diffusion, and moratorium'. Identity achievement is when individuals make decisions crucial for their identity. Foreclosure is when individuals take over given identities from parents or others without exploring alternatives. Identity diffusion is a passive state where no identity has been formulated, and no active exploration is done. Moratorium is an active phase of exploring and trying out different identities (Marcia, 1980). The evaluation of the method and the findings clearly show that the method helps the students explore identity. In many cases and in different ways, they came to identity achievement. This achievement in developing identity might also be the reason why the students had positive experiences of the process. I argue that the method made it possible to explore and try out different aspects of self and to arrive at informed judgements on self. These judgements made students take new decisions and confirmed the validity of earlier decisions. I argue that the method could be used in education, especially in late adolescence, with the purpose of exploring and articulating the student's identity.

***Existential Self-Understanding in Interpretation of Activities in the Arts; a
Method Exploring Uniqueness***

The findings of the pilot study, where a young mother took part, indicate that the method could be used in exploring experiences of activities other than dance. To be able to include her statements I contacted the participant and got permission to use the interview. I include this description because it adds to the understanding of what the method creates. In the dance, the participant expressed what she experienced as important in being mother. The movement was embracing but open. In the beginning of the interview, she discussed the important experience of taking care of her child. When writing the poem, new things came to her mind.

Poem (my translation):

‘You are my light. I am your ground.
You lift me. I carry you.
You open me. I embrace you.
You are in me. I am in you.’

This is a description of the meaningful, intersubjective relation between mother and child that happens when caring for the child. When interpreting the poem, she suddenly comes to a new insight. In the caring process, she experiences what the child can give her. The experiences of her caring for the child and feeling the child’s strong influence on her give her a totally new understanding of herself. She recognises how and why being in this situation is meaningful for her. A new experience of self is established in the dialogue between the experiences. Uniqueness found in the situation of being-in and awareness of different relations and the meaningfulness of those relations constitute the new experience of self. I include this example because it shows that the method can open up this existential experience in another domain of life.

Lave (2011) points out that to overcome the tendency to divorce knowing from practise in social research, the focus has to be put on relations, to explore relations in specific situations. From this perspective, it is assumed that it is impossible to construct only one way of describing the world (Kelly, 2014). As this thesis argues, the case is the same when describing oneself. The findings shows that the experience of dance is open and dynamic in nature, and students in this experience see many possibilities. The interpretative approach of the method supports different ways of describing the self. It creates a wider context around these experiences of self. It thus, in practice, transcends the idea of uniqueness as consisting of one single quality. Being in the movement is not experienced as static, logical, or rational but as dynamic and unpredictable, 'like everything' (L). What matters is the relation between the different experiences. An experience like what the young mother describes is dynamic and builds upon the awareness of different relations happening at the same time. It is an example of developmental change that is caused by dynamic interactions in relations (Mascolo and Fischer, 2009) and not by fixed conceptual ideas of what I am. What *I am* consists of and is formulated in relation to many experiences. In the process of the method, students are able to identify the formative relations and experience transformative moments. The findings show that in both cases, meaningfulness and informed judgements on many issues are the results. In some cases, the informed judgement develops to an individual truth, and students position themselves in relation to the world, sometimes with an insight on what is important to do in life.

In Chapter 2, an existential approach to education was discussed with the aim of exploring *I am* (Dahlin, 1993). The method clearly opens an existential

knowledge that gives a variety of possible interpretations of *I am*. This kind of knowledge can be seen as the counterpart of instrumental knowledge that aims to generalize theoretical knowledge where actions or participating subjects are replaceable. van Manen thus argues that phenomenology can be seen as ‘a philosophy or *theory of the unique*’, and it aims at exploring the irreplaceable (1990, p.7). This is found in actions, in situations, in practice. In similar ways, Biesta (2012) discusses uniqueness, irreplaceability, as an important factor in education, not as an objectified entity or a ‘what’ but as something situated and asks for ‘when’—when are we unique? How is this experienced? Uniqueness, according to Biesta (2012), is existential in the sense that meaning is a way of being-in-relation and being-in-question. It is existential in terms of subjectification of the experience that is not only an interior subjective matter. Existential uniqueness ‘is as much about action as it is about interiority’ (Biesta, 2012, p.589) and he argues that:

‘Education can at most aim to create openings for subjectivity to emerge – openings that always manifest themselves as interruptions of the normal state of affairs’ (Biesta, 2012, p.588).

I argue that the method used in the thesis made it possible to explore how action and interiority create a lived experience that open up for subjectivity in the sense of Biesta. However, the method positions itself in relation to uniqueness as described by van Manen (1990). The focus here is not only on the action, the embodied part of the expression, or on the inner experience of why dance is important but also on the moment when this is expressed. Thus, it explores both action and interiority through the activities in the arts. It explores the interpretative act. The capacity of arts to reveal truth in the moment of interpretation, as discussed in Chapter 4, needs a method focused on a particular moment. The *phenomenology of artistic practice* does this. It is a

method that explores uniqueness as experienced in situations of artistic activity. So when trying to define the process that the method call for, I arrived at *existential self-understanding in interpretation of activities in the arts*. This definition shows that the method is process-based, situated in the activity of creating art and that the activity of interpretation is the core issue. It is existential in Biesta's (2012) terms because it explores when and how we are unique. It explores uniqueness by exploring ways of being-in-relation and being-in-question. The words knowledge or learning can lead to an objectified relation to the qualities of the experience (Biesta, 2006). Self-understanding is a word closely related to the aims of HP (Wiercinski, 2012). As we saw, the method makes it possible to experience and understand different qualities, more or less, at the same time and to move between, compare the experiences. This connects it to the ontological basis for HP as discussed in Chapter 4. Gadamer (1993) argues that the basic activity in the process of revealing truth is play. Play is described as the possibility to constantly be in movement between and in relation to something. In this movement truth, can be revealed. The method makes it possible to move in between different experiences and interpretations of one experience thus exploring the meaning or truth of it. To arrive at *existential self-understanding* is the aim of the method.

Process-Based Views on the Method

In the evaluation of the method, the students claim that the process of the interview itself was important. Looking at what the students said in their first answer and examining their process to arrive at the last answer show a development of both the understanding of the experience and oneself. Because the method enhances the ability to describe processes, it provides findings that

move beyond objectified, conceptual descriptions. The review of J's description on how she arrived at an experience of relaxation in and through a most-active process is one example of a description that expands the conceptual meaning of the concept relaxation. J's first answer in the interview was that J experience that: '...one exists. It is not only school and work'. This is an existential answer in the sense that J became aware of herself. Later in the interview, J develops how to overcome stress. She gives a most detailed description of this when she interprets the picture; the process that made her relax can be easily followed. J's case shows that the interpretations of the artwork are crucial for J's creation of the bigger context where the experience is placed in. The context can be created because J is able to describe the process she experienced and to relate experiences with one to another. In Chapter 2, I reviewed researches in dance and identified verbalizing experiences as a major problem. When children express experiences of dance they often, as Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) notes, in very summarized form use concepts like freedom, relaxation, security, or happiness. The dialogue with the artworks makes the students reflect on when and how these experiences happen, and findings show that this dialogue expands the conceptual perspective of the experience. The findings show that these descriptions of processes are rich and detailed. This way of understanding the experience puts focus on a wider aim of an interpretation, which is to create an understanding that is embedded in a larger context (Wertz, 2005). The method makes this possible thus findings expand earlier research on dance in education.

The method uses different situations to interpret both the experience and formative relations: different arts, different artistic expressions, interpretations of

expressions, comparative elements, and the dialogue with interviewer. The findings show that students become aware of themselves in different ways, and they develop perspectives on what they may become. Lave (2011) uses the concept of apprenticeship for the process of how tailors learn their profession. This method operates in another field of research, but I argue that the concept of apprenticeship could also be used here because it expresses an open attitude of creating meaning through a practice-based activity in specific situations. F's detailed description of how she learns to understand herself is an example of this. In the process of interpreting the experience and establishing an understanding, students have an open attitude towards the aim of the interpretation. The method makes it possible for the students to try out different interpretations. It is a method that supports apprenticeship in the process of developing self-understanding.

As discussed in Chapter 2, researches in social and ethnographic domains have shown that practice-based knowing is closely related to questions on identity and relations to others and to self. Through the method, the students explore self and relation to dance and life. How the process of understanding develops is unique to each individual. The differences can be seen in how activities or phases of the process are of different importance for individual students. This is an interesting topic that, I believe, needs to be explored deeper. This exploration could be done by treating each student as a case and revealing the unique story of how and when a wider understanding of the experience and context to place the experience in is created. Such an analysis would be important to do for evaluation of the method, and it would expand the understanding of the findings. The method of analysis in the thesis focuses on

identifying important themes. A focus on themes loses the process of the individual and limits the analysis to only that perspective. However, the themes give a general understanding of the experiences and their context; and to arrive at the themes was the main aim of the thesis. The next step is to analyse the process of each student and how a context of self-understanding is created. I see this as a most promising project to do, and something that I want to do in the future.

The Contribution of the Different Arts

The capacity of different forms of arts to reveal new perspectives and make people see themselves in new ways is an important part of ABR. As discussed in Chapter 2, claims are made that a picture can mirror who we are in an outer image, and poems can explore an inner space where processes of construction of self happen. The method makes it possible to arrive at clear findings on how the picture and poem contribute to the process of exploring and understanding the experience. The students state that the picture expresses feelings and the poem explains what was meant more concretely and on a deeper level. The statements that the pictures specifically express feelings stand out in relation to earlier studies (Leavy, 2009). One should consider that this might be because the origin of the picture is the experience of the dance, or the method affects the responses of the students. It is important to note that when students are answering the questions on what the picture and poem express, they often use terms like 'this is more like' or 'that one is less' before finding the final answer. Comparing helps to put the experiences into words, but it also influences their interpretation. One possibility is that they, in this comparative process, see the differences of poem and picture more clearly. Another possibility is as both the

picture and the poem are expressions of their own experience of dance; they see more clearly how this is represented differently in the other arts. It is important to remember that the students have different relations to the arts. Most students preferred to do the picture before the poem.

In the literature about images, claims are made that an image or a picture is closer to the experience than a text (Leavy, 2009). The picture is described as a phase in between experience and words/concepts. Q is one of more students who confirm this: 'The picture is of importance for the ability to form experiences into words'. However, the findings give other perspectives on this. Some students say that the poems are more intimate than the picture even if they state that the picture expresses their feelings. So they obviously describe different levels of the experience. H first did poem and then picture and narrate that he first created an image in the mind, and then he was able to write the poem. After this, the picture came as a visualisation of the inner image. However, the picture that H did had a different motive compared to the poem. This shows how open the experience is. The findings give clear evidence that the picture and poem give characteristic contributions to the interpretation of the experience. Looking at the individual level, this general impression is deepened and seems more complicated than the first sight. The interpretations of the poem and picture are part of the individual process of making meaning. The contribution that the picture and poem give is situated in the context of the process of the student. To explore this in more depth is important for the understanding of the contribution the arts give to understanding experience. This is a basic issue in ABR. The existing interviews contain materials that can be used for a deeper analysis. It might be that the process that the method

elicits, including a comparison of different artworks in relation to one experience, reveals qualities in the arts that cannot be explored in other ways.

In Chapter 2, it was discussed that a new step for ABR was seen in the exploration of the experiences of the arts and that such research is needed. The thesis explored this issue. It explored dance, but the method used could be appropriate for exploring other arts. Even if the focus is on one art, the findings open up how the arts relate one to another. Exploring these interactions in the arts could be a new way to explore how the different arts contribute to expression, communication, and understanding of experiences.

The Nature of the Method

HP rests on a method where interpretations move between different perspectives in a repetitive way thus has been described as a circle (see Chapter 4). Gadamer (1993) notes that this circle has to be seen in a temporal dimension because we never return to the same moment again. Ricoeur (1998) describes it as a spiral. The spiral is a visual image that gives the impression of a stable, forward-moving process. These perspectives on hermeneutic method apply to the method of the thesis. The method returns to the exploration of the moment of expressing the experience of the dance each time the dance is seen from a different perspective. I myself felt safe in the structured, slowly progressing design of the method, but there is another perspective on the method. In practice-based research, knowledge is embedded in actions or in situations thus it is tacit. An interruption in the normal ways of acting is needed (Küpers, 2011) to become aware of and experience the action. A moment of interruption is, as Biesta (2012) argues, crucial to the ability to develop

subjectified and existential knowledge. Such moments that disrupt the normal can elicit interpretative knowledge thus they were the basis of Biesta's (2012) *pedagogy of interruption*.

Interruption is an important part of this method because it starts with quite unusual tasks, to create three artworks with the experience of dance as a point of departure. These tasks moves outside of normal way of expression and interpretation, and the students are obviously challenged by them. A further interruption comes in the encounter with the artworks and the demanding task of interpreting them. The task of comparing the artworks is another form of interruption. Being part of the process, I saw how demanding the tasks could be, but also that it was a relief getting hold of something meaningful through the interpretation. In such cases, the interpretation is a highly existential situation. The artworks bring in the element of interruption, and, as argued earlier, these moments enhance interpretation and open new perspectives. The image of a stable, ongoing process cannot capture this. Something else happens—most students suddenly come to new understandings. A dramatic expression of how new insights may come while dancing is given by K. K states that solutions to problems in life come like: 'tjong, tjong'. Tjong is an onomatopoetic Swedish word that expresses the sound when one thing hits another thing. This is one example of how the process of understanding includes discontinuity. To be 'surprised of oneself', as F say, is another aspect of discontinuity. Transformation happens suddenly and moves the person to quite new experiences and expanded understanding (Gadamer, 1993).

My personal experience is that to rest in the stable structure of the interview makes it possible to come to an interpretative process that can open up understanding of experiences at the present. This is consistent with Gadamer's (1993) ideas that to be able to open up, one needs to rest in oneself and the method is helpful in that respect. My argument here is that the image of a spiral alone does not capture the actual process experienced when doing the interview. The spiral needs a surrounding in which it moves and relate to. This surrounding is far from being indifferent in relation to exactly how the spiral moves. In a dialogue between the stable forwards moving design of the method and interruptions, meaning is created in moments, and how this is done is different for each student. The students create a context of interpreted experiences to which new interpretations relate—this is part of the surrounding. The surrounding is created in interpretative activities in the arts, and these activities all originate in a question. The first task demands the students to ask themselves what they shall express and how they shall express it. The artwork is the answer. The task to interpret the picture and poem can be seen as a question: What is revealed in this artwork? So, I see the moments where the arts are involved as questions. As discussed in Chapter 4, to have a questioning stance towards life is in the context of to *be in* existence (Heidegger, 2010; Gadamer, 1993). These questions in the form of artistic activities are placed *in* existence. These forms of questions move the question from a philosophical to a practical realm. If we try to capture this in the image of the spiral, it must, first of all, move and this movement is different for each student. The interruptions influence this movement. Second, it can never have the same form. Third, what surrounds the spiral is as important as the spiral. The surrounding moves and is unlimited in space; it includes 'all

possibilities'(C). Fourth, the important part of the image is the moments of interruption and the following interaction, the dialogue, between the ongoing process of the method (spiral) and the surrounding. The aim with this reflection was to challenge the image of the method as a stable, ongoing process and to point out its dynamic nature.

The semi-structured interview is argued to be the best way to explore qualitative issues because it focuses on themes and at the same time opens up new influences (Kvale, 1983). Kvale (1983) views the work with interviews as a craft or an art while understanding is situated in specific social practices. The method of the thesis explores situations where complex relations in the experience of the individual student are identified, and the context of interpretations of self, being in this situation, is created. The method thus shows that multiple artistic activities and interpretation of created artworks can contribute to an expanded perspective on the qualitative interview. The method is a structure of activities and questions situated in a particular process. It is focused on what happens in the moment of expression and interpretation of an expression. The method makes it possible to establish a communicative dialogue between experiences and create a wider context of the understanding of the experiences. This can be described as a third space, or it can be, as discussed in Chapter 2, seen as a self-organisation of understanding that rests on communication between experiences (Davey, 2012). The method explores the 'in between'. An image of the method must thus expand the image of the spiral.

Findings

Important Themes

In this section, the main findings will be discussed. However, first, it is important to remember that the findings originate in the students' interpretation of the specific situation the research design afforded. The thesis thus does not seek to explore general perspectives on dance or dance in education. It does not focus on what the different dance styles contribute to education. It is also important to remember that the task the students did was more of an improvisational dance that not relies on specific movement patterns.

In Chapter 5, the findings are presented in different ways. The main part of the presentation is the themes. These themes correspond well with research on the experience of dance in education. The summary of the experience of dance that was mentioned in page 178, 'to learn about oneself' and 'to learn how to find oneself', correspond to the findings in the studies reviewed in Chapter 2. Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) point out two main aspects of dance in education: dance as a way to explore who I am and might become and dance as a possibility to go beyond the given, open up transformation. Fraleigh's (2000) findings that experiences in dance enhance students' self-awareness points to the same direction. Studies on adults also show that the main contribution of dance is to find oneself, learn to know oneself, reveal oneself (Miller, 2010; Sheets-Johnstone, 1999; Stinson, 2004), learn that 'I matter' (Lussier-Ley, 2010, p.197), and know that learning by interacting with the world through dance can foster self-confidence (Leavy, 2009). So, it can be argued that a basic contribution of the experience of dance is how to find and learn to know oneself. This exploration of self is the central issue of the thesis. It is mirrored in

the different themes in different ways. The first theme: *To be in the dance makes students feel secure and be able to rest in themselves. It makes them feel strong, complete, and authentic*, is the basic experience. The experiences of freedom, well-being, hope, and happiness rest on this theme. The findings of the thesis thus confirm findings of earlier researches that students explore themselves in dance and dance enhances self-awareness. In addition, the findings include a range of different and detailed descriptions of how this is experienced and how to get to this experience. They show the process-based nature of this experience, and, maybe most importantly, that the students were able to create a larger context of interpretations of the experience of self. Comparing the other themes: the experience of personal change, the nature of the experience, and the capacity of dance to strengthen motivation and endurance with Bond and Stinson's (2000/2001, 2007) categories for significant experiences of dance: another place/time, magical or spiritual dimension, transformation, motivation, and with the first two of Frichtel's (2012) categories: freedom and transformation, shows that these themes also correspond very well to earlier findings. So, the basic claim is that the findings of the thesis confirm earlier research. The main themes are similar to themes in earlier research. They are existential themes and deal with exploration and transformation of self. Because the method made possible to explore these themes more in depth, the findings expand earlier research in different ways. One example on this follows.

The experience of freedom is an important part of the experience of dance. Dance elicits freedom, and, as Bond and Stinson notes (2000/2001), this often is expressed by one word or a short statement. One example that the findings

of the thesis are based on a deeper inquiry in the experience of freedom is student O's development of what freedom is. O's first answer was:

'Every time I have moved in dance or eurythmy, it has been so that I forget everything and only feel this freedom.'

Much later in the interview, O has deepened the understanding of the experience, and O relates that understanding to life:

'One needs the driving force in life; there are lots of problems that stop one to do something. One should do this and that, and nobody asks what oneself wants in life, and it is the driving force that gets this out, this: No! Now I want to do what I myself want . . . This driving force is released, one can feel it better' (O).

This quote reveals an expanded description of the experience, to release and feel the driving force. This experience strengthens O's ability to make a decision and makes it possible to do 'what I, myself', want to do. O argues that it is important to become aware of to release and get the own decision 'out'. This description widely extends the first statement. A context is provided, and O places the experience of freedom; it is the driving force. Student F points out that freedom is a specific state of mind, which includes different kinds of experiences:

'I do not feel thrown out into nothing. It is not that kind of freedom or such that I fumble in nothing, but it feels very concrete. It does not feel muddled to me; it is just something my body does that I can experience somehow. It is different kinds of experiences, which there are no real words for, and it is like a condition, what happens in my body with different energies' (F).

Here, freedom is experienced as a state of mind that is possible to experience in a dialogue that happens with the body. The whole contribution of F deals with the question of freedom but almost without using the word. This experience includes how to experience the own will in the dance and how the dialogue between intention and body movement are experienced as if one has control in situations, but, at the same time, F argues that she has no control:

'I feel myself quite uncritical and not judging myself while it does not feel like it is something conscious that I think it is things that happen, and I do not judge them and that is why I feel very comfortable there. Somehow, there are no limitations' (F).

This freedom is experienced in the dance, in the energies that constitute the experience. In her poem, F describes that the body led this process and made F think differently. In this 'ongoing discussion with oneself', as F expresses it, F finds herself, experience freedom and new perspectives about herself are revealed. This freedom is different from O's freedom because it focuses on the constant discussion with oneself. O's experience of freedom is placed in a dialogue with life. Student C adds to the experience of freedom:

'Freedom and that one is independent, somehow. One is outside of everything else, still at the same time in a room where one stands on a floor and one does something. One has a control over what one does that still not closes oneself in; it is a control that somehow is held back, something that takes one somewhere; it is a damned pleasant feeling' (C).

Here, freedom is experienced as to have control, but at the same time C is, open, held back and taken somewhere. Freedom is located into a situation where contradictory activities operate at the same time. Student I describes freedom as experiencing timelessness in the body:

'When one is totally in the movement, then it is somehow timeless, yes, but it is this that has to do with freedom that one can let loose of everything and that one does not think so much on what happens outside that time passes by; it is connected to this; one feels free . . . It is this I experience in my body. I get such a freedom' (I).

These descriptions are slightly different forms of freedom. It is not only freedom *from* ordinary life. It is a situated activity; something one is in and where one is in relation to different things such as one's will, the body, and the world outside. It shows the complexity of the experience, and how each student identifies different aspects of the experience. With this, I wanted to give examples on how the findings expands the knowledge on what the students experienced when

they claim that they experience freedom in the dance. The findings open for a wider understanding of the basic experiences of dance as the example freedom shows. The findings provide contextualized understandings of the experience that extend results of earlier studies.

Dance Elicits Positive Experiences

Establishing conflicting cases (see page 194) shows that the positive effect of dance in students' lives stands out. The experiences are positive because the students experience well-being, relaxation, freedom, happiness, hope, motivation, and meaningfulness. These influence their lives and how they face different situations. Students evaluate these experiences as being strongly positive. As one student put it:

‘It feels well both in body and mind . . . When it feels so good as it does then one gets hope, one gets hope for, I do not know, the future or whatever. If something else is difficult it lifts you up.’ (D)

For an overall view of findings seen from this perspective, I constructed the following list of experiences. It is constructed based on the themes from the findings of the first two questions. All texts that did not directly focus on the experience are excluded. The students experience the following:

To feel secure and be able to rest in oneself.

To feel strong, complete, and authentic.

To feel well.

To become calm and less strained in life.

To experience freedom, relaxation, happiness, and hope.

To develop as a person.

Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) also note the positive effect of dance on children's experiences of life. Looking closer at the descriptions of the positive experiences reveals that these experiences are often reflected in relation to the students' negative experiences in life. The following list of answers to the question about importance of the experience in dance in life, as summarized in the themes, give further evidence on the positive effects of experiences done in dance.

To open up new horizons in life and think new thoughts.

To strengthen endurance and concentration.

To have a secure centre, a home in life.

To get a wider understanding of what one can do in life and how to find one's own way through life.

To learn how to handle situations and feelings in a way that can be useful in life.

To work on oneself and solve problems or questions in real life.

To get power and motivation to fight for things in life.

I argue that, these lists substantiate in a persuasive way the claim that the findings give evidence of the positive influence the experience of dance on the students and their lives. Earlier research has highlighted this theme, and the findings expand the knowledge on this. It does so by contextualizing the experiences and by connecting them to life. I will place these perspectives on the positive experiences of dance into the recent discussion on the importance of the arts in education.

That cultural activity can enhance happiness and self-esteem is shown in a study done in Swedish schools over a number of years (Lindgren, 2013). As

shown in Chapter 2, claims are made that when discussing the value of the arts in education, we should leave the claim that they are good for specific abilities in activities outside of the arts. We shall not look for transfer effects but for effects on life itself. The arts provide their own specific contribution. Koopman argues: 'They are good life itself' (2005, p.96). An exact definition of good life is difficult to find. Varkøy (2012) argues that we must see this as a quality that is opposed to utility thus has a value in itself and for itself. The OECD report identifies different activities as the main contributions of the arts in education: developing introspection and individual meaning making, new ways of knowing, habits of mind, motivation, and 'it is difficult to imagine an education for better lives without arts education' (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p.262). Same authors also argue that if the arts have a prominent role in education: 'well-being and happiness of individuals will be higher' (2013, p.265). Skolverket (2010), the Swedish National Agency for Education, published a report from a longitudinal survey on pupils' attitudes towards school discussing the high increase in the number of students in adolescence who constantly feel stressed compared to the statistics about the same situations in 1997. A Swedish national survey on the living conditions among children conducted every other year provided data on the increase in sleeping disturbances. In 1980, 9% of the girls reported sleeping disturbances. In 2003, it was 27% (Bremberg, 2006). This situation urge specialists researching the situation for adolescents in school to argue that much public concern must be put on the question of reducing stress in schools (Schraml, 2013). Low self-esteem, low motivation, emotional exhaustion, difficulties to handle moods, poor self view, and low activity in social relations are some factors associated with high stress (Schraml, 2013). A low self-esteem is considered to be the main negative factor

(Stinson et al., 2008). Schraml (2013, p.12) defines global self-esteem as 'one's overall positive or negative attitude towards the self'. To develop a positive attitude towards the self is thus an important task. Bremberg (2006) argues that high academic demands and lack of control in schoolwork are main factors for high stress.

This thesis shows how students through the experiences in dance develop a positive attitude towards self. The list of positive experiences above convincingly indicates that the students experience a positive attitude towards the self and developed a positive self-esteem. The list of conflicting cases (see page 194) covers many of the negative aspects reported above. The findings on freedom show how dance helps the students handle demands and how they experience control, a control that is experienced as pleasant and involves the students fully. The global positive self-esteem and motivation for handling difficult situations in life that the students described in the findings points out that the contribution of dance in education is substantial. It can address the reported problems with stress and can do so using an activity that can overcome strong demands and develop a feeling of control in life. I find C's statement a good contribution to this theme:

'One feels so new in oneself without boasting, and think that I am so damned good; I am the best and so. It only feels good for my own sake' (C).

I see this quote as one of many precise definitions of what students consider a good life. The findings show that the experiences of dance develop experiences opposite to low self-esteem, low motivation, emotional exhaustion, difficulties to handle moods and poor self view. And, given that so many adolescents today experience high stress and low positive self-esteem (Schraml, 2013), I argue

that the findings support the claim that it is important to include dance as a compulsory subject in school.

As discussed in Chapter 2, experiences in the arts can be important in identifying aims in life. The report from the Swedish National Institute for Public Health (SFI, 2005) claims that the arts can have specific health effects. The report also highlights that the arts can help enhance self-understanding and give energy to 'develop big parts of the desired life project' (Theorell in SFI, 2005, p.80). To have this energy is especially important in adolescence when an understanding of self is changing, and the young person encounters demanding situations concerning identity. I discussed this earlier when discussing that the method of the thesis could be used to explore identity and life course in late adolescence. The findings support this idea. Understanding oneself and aims in life are related and through dance, it is possible to explore this relation. The lists of positive experiences above shows that experiences in dance are a practical way of developing positive self-esteem but important is also that dance helps exploring self in actions that are meaningful in life. These positive experiences are about to *solve problems in real life*, to get motivation to *fight for things in life*, to *find one's way through life*, to *open up new horizons in life and think new thoughts*.

I see this as examples of an education toward 'sensitivity to life and protest against indifference' (Wiercinski, 2012, p.115) and as a central issue of recent education. The ability to stay in a conversation with life, even when life is difficult, was seen as crucial (Wiercinsky, 2012). I argue that the findings of the thesis show that experiences in dance can be seen as the opposite to

indifference and can make students sensitive to themselves and their situation in life. This is substantiated by statements about the engagement needed to be in the dance, the full and strong experience of self, the nature of the experience of dance, and, not least, the varied statements showing sensitivity and motivations to handle situations in life. I argue that the findings show that good life is not something one has or one can learn, but it is something one does and develops in specific situations in life. From this perspective, the findings are like an exploration of what good life is for the students. Findings of the thesis show a way to 'introspect and find personal meaning' (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p.265). The thesis explores dance for the sake of dance, and the findings give a substantial contribution to the question on what the contribution of dance is to a good life.

Transformation: Nature of the Experience

The answers to the question about the importance of the experience in dance to life extend earlier studies. The findings show that these experiences are unique. I tried to capture them in the following part of the poem *Life and dance—dance in life*.

'Dance—to handle oneself, to handle situations, to handle the surprisingly unknown.

It feels like I have solved it, but how?—the dance knows.

How can I find meaning in all this?—the dance knows.

I really found out—but how?—the dance knows.

B

U

T

How can the dance know?

I don't know.

I only know that IT happens.

I only know that the dance never lets me down. It lets loose, it cleans up, it prepares for new things to come in—fun—freedom—change—hard work—hope—energy—concentration—motivation—feeling secure.'

The character of these experiences extends normal everyday life experiences. However, they are still experienced as very real and of very high importance for the student's life. The students' experience that they develop as persons through these experiences of dance, that they change and see new perspectives in life. In previous studies (Bond and Stinson, 2000/2001; Frichtel, 2012), this is contextualized as transformation and one of the main themes connected to dance. In the findings, it is expressed in these themes:

In dance, the students experience that they work on themselves and solve problems and questions in real life. They experience and learn to handle situations and feelings in a way that can be useful for them in life.

Dance can prepare for opening up new horizons in life and make students think new thoughts.

Transformation is described as something that happens:

‘When one stands there, one instantly feels like something is turned on; something happens . . . I do not know what happens’ (S).

K said that solutions to problems come when ‘I am allowed to move it only comes.’ Some students do not even know when it happens. F states ‘I experience very clearly that I feel well but I do not know exactly the direct link.’ The experience is very clear, but how it is related to the dance is not clear. K mentions that the experience of dance helps to develop oneself: ‘One feels fine and gets oneself sorted out.’ S sees a direct link between dance and life: ‘Whatever happens in life, I work on it in dance; one goes in and cleans up.’ The experience of dance makes them see new perspectives: ‘When I experienced this, it was then I began to think this way on everything else in life too’ (L). These are examples of experiences of transformation. The findings of the thesis confirm earlier studies on dance arguing that personal transformation is an important part of the contribution of dance in education. In addition, examples

above show that the findings provide detailed information about these experiences.

When discussing the ontological fundament of the method in Chapter 4, I quoted Gadamer's (1993) definition of transformation as something that happens suddenly and that means a total change of the person. To see things totally new is for Gadamer (1993) the aim of an interpretative process. This means that the everyday consciousness is transformed. The findings substantiate that the students achieved this aim. The findings show that the nature of the experience is important and that it makes transformation possible.

The difference of the experience of dance from everyday life is an important finding of the thesis. Earlier studies also discussed this. Two of Bond and Stinson's (2000/2001) categories: another place/time, magical or spiritual dimension, point out that experiences elicited by dance are very different from everyday life experiences and something the pupils strive to experience. In the findings, this is expressed in the theme: *The experience of dance is built upon dynamic opposites that are active at the same time and interact with each other.* The words in this theme expand the view on the experience and makes clear that the experience of dance is built on opposites that are active at the same time and create a dynamic tension within the experience. Typical statements are: 'at the same time', 'it is both', or 'it is like opposites.' In the findings different kinds of tensions can be identified:

A spatial tension:

'It is both somehow concentrated but at the same time extremely spread out in all directions' (B).

A dynamic tension:

'It is calm and power at the same time' (R). 'It is pleasant and calm but at the same time challenging' (T). 'The pressure in the heart that is both comfortable and at the same time so unpleasant' (L).

A dynamic process:

'I experience this explosion of energy that again is concentrated' (F).

I see this closely related to the theme: *Dance elicits strong feelings. To experience feelings is an important part of dance.*

L describes the experience like this:

'For me it was enormous many feelings. I did not know if I was happy or sad or like everything. It feels a little bit like this is the aim; it is this I want; this is what I want to achieve' (L).

These statements summarise different aspects of the experience. It is an experience of tension, and, in this tension, one can find something new, something important. The aim is to come into this experience and be there; the feelings give access to other perspectives. Or as T notes, 'For those who not dance much, it might be difficult to think that the feelings are most important.' The expressions 'for me' or 'for those who' show that this is no objectified description of processes but a first person perspective of a situation being in a multitude of feelings. It is not a pure subjective stance because it is an experience of something. It is not an essentialist approach seeking the essence of something within oneself. It is a situated experience of oneself that reveals a multitude of possibilities in the moment they are 'turned on', 'happen':

'It is like to feel totally complete and at the same time totally lost; like if one is part of something big, one really feels magnificent. One is extremely big and extremely small at the same time. Like nothing and everything. Yes, something shifting. It is like a spectrum of colours and feelings' (A).

In this experience A finds what she calls 'authenticity'. This state of mind is her 'refuge' where she feels 'complete'. So this dynamic experience is argued to be

an important part of A's self-understanding. This is the opposite of an instrumental, technocratic, and detached relation to life resting on an objectified third-person perspective (Moran, 2000). Dewey argues that the relation to life is found in experience, and thus experience is the central issue in education (Dewey, 1938 [1997]). As discussed in Chapter 4, experience is seen as constituted of different dynamic energies (Dewey, 1934 [2005]), polarities creating something new (Vygotsky, 1986), and as an embodied dialogue crisscrossing between a perspective seen from inside and outside the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1968 [1987]). The task is thus to explore the relations between the dynamic constituent parts of the whole, but this whole is neither 'emotional, practical, nor intellectual' because these are already distinctions that 'reflection can make within it' (Dewey, 1934 [2005], p.38). For Dewey 1934 [2005]) the ability to move the attention within the experience is crucial, and he argues that how we move the attention in itself is part of the dialogue with the quality of the experience. The arts can especially produce strong experiences (Dewey, 1934 [2005]). Studies on strong experiences in music clearly substantiate the dynamic and unitary quality of experience (Gabrielsson, 2011). The findings of the thesis substantiate that the students are able to explore different qualities in the experience and relate these to themselves. Dewey (1934 [2005], p.202) argues that what the experience of a work of art can achieve is that we are introduced to:

'the deeper reality of the world in which we live in our ordinary experiences. We are carried out beyond ourselves to find ourselves.'

In the case of the experiences of dance, this experience is located within my own movements, and the constituents are my own experiences of expressing something in dance. What stands out in the findings is the awareness of

detailed relations that constitutes the experience of self. The findings thus show that being in the dance makes it possible to explore and interpret what Dewey (1934 [2005]) calls constituent parts of the experience. Being able to interpret experiences and relate them to oneself constitute what Marcia (1980) calls self-structure. We earlier saw that the method used in the thesis help students to interpret and create a meaningful context when they are in the dynamic experiences.

The findings show that the students through the experience of dance get access to experiences they value very high, and they state that to be in these experiences is one reason for dancing. The nature of these experiences is dynamic and open in character. The students experience that they change in these experiences of dance, but they do not know exactly how it happens. If it happens, it is part of the process. To be in the experience is part of the understanding of the experience. Without being-in the experience transformation does not happen. The findings are examples on how the perspectives of Dewey, Vygotsky, and Merleau-Ponty on experience, reviewed in Chapter 4, can be explored in a practical educational context. Findings also indicate that dance is an activity which offers a unique possibility to explore experience and widen the experience of what it is to be human. Dewey's experiences of movement, Merleau-Ponty's philosophy as well as historical sources referred to in Chapter 2 points in this direction.

Seen from Gadamer's (2001) perspective that education is self-education, I argue that the findings give practical and detailed information on the prerequisite needed to be in conversation with life, and how this kind of

education happens in real life. In Chapter 7, I will discuss this from a theoretical point of view. The thesis confirms the results of previous studies that show that experiences in dance lead to personal transformation. In addition, it adds an expanded understanding of how and when these changes are experienced.

Different Ways of Knowing

It could be seen as a contradiction that the students, when describing the nature of the experience of being in the dance, use words such as 'to be oneself', 'to be authentic', 'to be unique' and at the same time describe their experiences as very open situations full of tensions and possibilities. To be unique is not experienced as a closed autonomous self, resting in itself. Uniqueness is experienced in a specific and dynamic situation. The contradiction is not a contradiction if we understand that the perspective the students has on their experience of self is dynamic. Explanations of self are not done in rational terms. As discussed in Chapter 2, dance is another way of knowing, another way of thinking (Fraleigh, 2000). Drawing on experiences in visual arts, Sullivan (2005, p.125-128) proposes that we in the arts deal with a knowledge consisting of: 'thinking in a medium', 'thinking in a language', 'thinking in a context'. I argue that the experiences of dance presented in the thesis moves in the same direction, but I see a difference. Although some students said that dance is another way of thinking, I argue that the use of the word understanding is more appropriate. Thinking is related to a cognitive context, and to argue that it is another kind of thinking needs to define thinking as based on experiences such as those discussed above. I argue that understanding is a word that stays closer to the existential context that the experiences express. As Dewey (1934 [2005]) argues, it is more about to structure energies and at the same time give

structure to oneself. It is more about actions. According to Dewey (1934 [2005]), thinking or reflection is only one of different ways to approach the quality of an experience. Dewey's own experiences of movement, as reviewed in Chapter 2, made it clear that these experiences are very strong, are vital, and include the totality of the human including habits and moral impulses. Dahlin (1993) argues in the same direction when he discusses the close relation between understanding, apprehending and perceiving in an existential experience. To use the concept of thinking on the understanding of an experience thus seems to me to exclude important aspects of the process of creating meaning. The following quote from C is typical for how the students used the word understanding:

‘One feels more unified as person and at the same time somehow full of nuances and one gets a bigger understanding for what one can do.’

The quote shows that understanding is not so much about thinking in the normal sense of the word; it is rooted in being-in oneself, being in the experience, and focusing on activities, possibilities.

When the students discuss that the aim is ‘to be the one you are’, to be ‘unique’, ‘authentic’, they do not exactly know what the aim is. They know that it is real and that they can find the way to this experience. The dance helps them experience their aims, but their aims are not conceptualised and defined as: ‘this is what I shall become’. The experience rests on *being*, and, out of this, something will *become*. It is the possibility and the openness of the life process that students express. In and through these situations, they argue that they develop, and in the process they learn to identify what is important. In the case of student N, N understood that he had to wait. To wait is to be conscious and

active in resting between what has been and what will come. As N said: 'The future will come, and it is bright.' Such situated self-understanding is what the students experienced. This is an existential perspective. Existential in the sense that experience in specific situations in life influence and change our perception of self. As discussed in Chapter 2, Wimmer (2003) argues that one perspective on the renewal of *Bildung* is the ability to be open for the future. To trust in the situation where one is in and hope in relation to what will come is a way to overcome pre-given concepts of self. In this perspective, education can be turned towards the possibilities. It rests on the moment, and possibilities of the future are experienced in that moment. N's description above is a good example on how the experience of dance can relate to the future. In the findings, there are other examples of this experience, sometimes conceptualised as hope. That the experience of dance elicits sensitivity for the future that can lead to informed judgements on what to do in life is a way of knowing that transcends normal perspectives on thinking.

The discussion on the value of the arts in education has, as reviewed in Chapter 2, been dominated by arguments aimed at the development of cognitive abilities. The shift away from transfer effects might need a discussion of concepts used. The findings contribute to this discussion by claiming that the word understanding seems more appropriate to describe the knowledge developed. From an educational perspective, it is important to articulate alternative ways of knowing with other purposes and other points of departure other than rational knowledge. The thesis contributes to this discussion by opening new perspectives on how dynamic the experience of self in dance is. This places attention on the need to re-evaluate the concepts used in the

discussion on the arts in education. Existing research, as reviewed in Chapter 2, and the findings of this thesis clearly imply that dance provides new ways of knowing and can explicitly support self-exploration. However, further research in this area and a discussion of how to conceptualise findings are strongly needed.

Motivation

The findings show that students' experiences they develop motivation, concentration, and endurance as expressed in the theme: *Dance strengthens the endurance and gives students the power and motivation to fight for other things in life. Dance enhances the ability to concentrate on other things in life.*

As reviewed in Chapter 2, studies show that engagement in dance strengthens motivation and endurance. Arguments are raised that schools today, while focused on test results, do not develop enough motivation and strength (Henrekson and Sanandaji, 2013). As a consequence, non-cognitive abilities such as self-discipline, endurance, and motivation, which are of high importance for success in life, are underdeveloped. The findings of the thesis show that students' experience of motivation, endurance, and concentration are strengthened through dance. In individual cases, such as that of N, it is clarified how this happens. N said that through dance, self-discipline is developed, and 'the ability to concentrate becomes much more mature.' N explains this by describing what factors in dance made this possible: in dance, one can 'collect oneself' and not 'roam in the skies'; one can feel that one 'is in the body' that it is possible to 'feel with the movements one does with the arms' thus 'show with the body what one thinks'. This explanation of how concentration is developed includes different aspects of the experience of being in the dance. It is clear that dance is not only about the physical movement. To feel oneself, to feel with the

movements, to show what one thinks using the body are all aspects of being in the expressive, interpretative process of the dance. N argues that all these activities together make the concentration more mature. This example indicates that this ability cannot be trained in an instrumental manner. It is developed in existential situations in activities. The story of N is also an example on how findings in the thesis expand earlier knowledge by identifying different important activities that strengthen N's concentration. Many students had similar experiences as the theme above indicates. The findings thus confirm results of earlier studies that show that experiences in dance enhance motivation and endurance. Motivation, as Henrekson and Sanandaji (2013) suggest, is an important part for success in life, and how to strengthen it needs to be considered in education. Studies show that other arts influence motivation, endurance, concentration, and ability to transform (Eisner, 2002; Hetland *et al.*, 2007). However, the present study and other studies (Bond and Stinson, 2007) suggest that this influence is specifically strong in dance. Based on this, I argue that dance should be included in education. The discussion on the contribution of the different arts to motivation points out the importance of conducting comparative studies using qualitative methods aimed at exploring this question.

Physical Movement and Interpretative Movement

It is well established today that movement is important for physical and mental well-being of the human. One recent example is a study on aerobics, gymnastic movement to music, that shows that well-being and feeling of being embodied is strengthened in participants (Madison, Paulin and Aasa, 2013). Studies exploring the importance of physical education and sports in school indicate that these activities are beneficial on four broad domains: physical, social, affective,

and cognitive. Results are most distinct in the physical domain and most weak in the cognitive domain (Bailey *et al.*, 2009). Studies comparing how sports and the arts influence academic achievement found less significant advantages of students with higher engagement in sports than of students with higher engagement in arts (Caterall, 2009). I include this discussion because I believe that the physical aspect of the movement influences the findings of the thesis. However, the students themselves made the distinctions between physical movement and dance clear. The interpretative aspect of the movement, the expression of something internal, and the moment of expression are important in dance. As (A) describes dance:

‘It is something that is totally essential to me. I would not survive without it. I need to use my body and work physically with it in a way that not is like standing in a gym and pull weights, but I need to express myself with my body . . . dance is intimacy.’

Dance is a physical activity, but the experience is intimate and the process has existential value. Student A summarises that when doing physical training, one generally develops more energy and enhances the endurance, but in addition to this, ‘dance has a purpose also in relation to oneself; one develops all the time as person’. For B, the moment of interpretation is most important:

‘It is first when I share what I have that it is me that maybe the most important thing is that between that I show it and that I feel it. There one is somehow free from both oneself and the others.’

The moment of showing the dance is, for B, a moment of both revealing oneself and understanding oneself. The description of B identifies the interpretative moment where the important aspect is what happens between the dance and the feeling of the dance. This moment is crucial for B. She argues that it is there in that specific moment she can reveal herself to others. In B’s poem, it is expressed as follows (my translation):

'The dance is mine.
Nobody can take my dance from me.
It is only for me.
Until I share it with you,
Until I have chosen to show my dance for you,
Until I have chosen to show myself to you.'

This clearly shows that it is the interpretative moment that constitutes dance. Rustad (2012) also argues that there is a difference between dance and physical movement. However, I argue that the physical activities that students did in dance is one factor in their experience of well-being. The rich and detailed descriptions, as the examples from student A and B, originate in the interpretative process that distinguishes dance from physical movement. This is the other factor. However, to arrive at clarity on this, further research must be conducted. The findings claiming that physical training improves psychological and emotional development (Bailey *et al.*, 2009) could be compared with studies exploring the influence of dance. I argue that new studies comparing the experience of physical movement and dance movement aiming at exploring the lived experience of the activity are needed to clarify this issue.

***To Be in the Dance:
Findings Discussed in Contemporary, Educational Perspectives***

In Chapter 2 and 3, it was discussed that to be able to meet the challenges in recent society, education must overcome both the instrumental as well as essentialist position. Davey (2012) argues that education must move towards what happens in between, in the relations, in specific situations, in communicative interactions. Rational knowledge cannot approach these situations thus Davey (2012) argues that the development of the ability to interpret lived experiences in life must be an aim for education today. Today, different existential views on self and life coexist and collide (Wiercinski, 2012).

Demands on the individual concerning ways of being and justifying ways of living are high. Kemp (2011) argues that the challenge today is to find a way to interpret these ever-changing situations we are facing. Cultural change, social change, and linguistic change all influence the individual (Davey, 2012). Bauman (2006) analysing the situation for the contemporary individual and drawing on a number of examples from recent culture and society argues that the situation for the individual today is characterized by insecurity. The experiences of insecurity and loss of control over situations in life can develop to fear. Bauman (2006) uses the concept liquid fear because existence is experienced as fleeting—nothing is secure. Bauman (2006) identifies two basic existential qualities that the individual need to establish: security and freedom. Without them, an encounter and consequently an interpretation of the encounter are difficult to establish. The findings show that many students are very conscious about the struggle to experience security and freedom. It is the basic finding of the thesis that being in the dance elicits feelings of security, freedom, and well-being. Dance makes it possible, as J say, to experience that one exists. The findings thus substantiate that the experience of dance can be a 'home' where the students feel safe and free. This should be considered when discussing the relevance of dance in education in times when the individual is challenged in existential ways. Dance in education can give a substantial contribution to establish the feeling of individual security and freedom.

In Chapter 2, existential perspectives on education were discussed. The perspectives of Dahlin (1993), who focus on the experience of *I am*, and Biesta, who argues that our relation to the world basically is an existential relation, were reviewed. Biesta (2012) argues that education is a *meaningful process*, not only

a learning of something. To develop meaning rests on *interpretation* and thus on processes that open new views. Interpretation rests on the *encounter with the lived experience* of something real, and it is possible to develop informed judgements on self and *create truths* in the lived experience. Education thus moves towards an 'existential' context (Biesta, 2012, p.588). Education is existential in the sense that interpretation is the core activity, and meaning is created in a realm resting on a dialogue between oneself and the world. Drawing on Arendt (1996), Biesta (2006) sees what he calls democratic subjectivity in a performative perspective. This kind of subjectivity only occurs in the moment of action, and its quality can be compared to the performing arts. Subjectivity is both action and interiority (Biesta, 2012). Although Biesta's (2012) sociological perspective is different from the perspective in the thesis, there is a connection between the two on this important level. Uniqueness, Biesta (2012) argues, rests on an exploration of the particularity of how I am unique in myself and not on an exploration of how I am different from others. Biesta (2012, p.587) uses the term irreplaceability for this uniqueness and argues that uniqueness is closely related with the 'interruption' (Biesta, 2012, p.588) of the own position. It is not *what* that is most important but *when*. The question of *when* I am unique challenges instrumental approaches to education as education as a form of socialisation. Biesta argues that the concept of *pedagogy of interruption* is difficult to embed into a specific programme and calls for a development of forms of pedagogy that can 'operate in the domain of the existential rather than the domain of essence' (2012, p.589). In my opinion, the thesis both in method and in subject is an example of a form of pedagogy that explores the existential domain. To move Biesta's perspectives from a sociological context to questions on the importance of dance in education is

thus not a big move. As discussed earlier, the method used in the thesis can be viewed as a practical way to explore subjectivity and uniqueness as defined by Biesta (2012). The findings substantiate that in the experience of dance the students' experience and form individual uniqueness and informed judgements on self. Such understanding of self originates in the lived experience of dance that is dynamic in its nature and can only be approached *when* one is in it. It is, as F made clear, located in *when* it happens. In this moment, the students establish relations to what is experienced, and this gives an understanding of *how I am*. The findings provide an array of examples on how and when uniqueness is experienced and formed. The students very often use the words self, oneself, and myself not as a description of self but as part of a situation: 'I am simply myself in it' (B). In Biesta's (2012) terms, this shows that the experience of self is not a question of *what* it is but *when* it is. So, I argue that the findings provide lived examples on how an interpretative activity in dance can address the questions that Biesta raises about education. I also argue that the findings widen perspectives on irreplaceability and uniqueness. The students mention that the experience of dance makes them: 'find the way back home' (J). Here in their 'refuge' from everyday experiences, they experience: 'to be unique' (I), 'being one with oneself, it is authentic, it is true and genuine' (A), 'to be able to focus on . . . yes that one exists, it is not only school and work' (L). *In* the experience of dance, the students find a home; feet secure, free, and happy; and experience that they exist. This can be summarised as an experience of *I am*. However, this *I am* is not a fixed experience as shown in the examples from F, J, and N; it needs to be in a process. It is not a what; it is something moving, and being in this movement is an interruption of the everyday consciousness. The students believe that they must invest much

energy to be in the movement. Therefore, a more exact description of these experiences is *when I am*. Such experiences are, as we saw, most dynamic and a moment of communication as F described. In F's detailed description (see page 184) it is clear that the exploration of uniqueness rests on being-in the dialogue between expression and movement. This opens up an expanded consciousness where F experiences herself as very awake and very conscious of what surrounds her. F is also very conscious about her own intention being a part of the communicative interaction that she experience. F is able to relate to something 'if I want'. How these relations are done is part of the understanding of *how I am*. This *how* is not a conceptualised image of self but the experiences of self in activity—what is important for me to do? How can I develop informed judgement? What does freedom mean to me? The understanding is developed in three phases. First, to be in the dance makes it possible to experience oneself in way that is different from everyday life, to experience that 'one exists' - *I am*. Second, when being in the dance, in the experience of dance, a dynamic state of mind in communication with all possibilities of self, is explored - *when I am*. Third, in this dynamic state of mind, an experience of self as a way of being is possible to experience - *how I am*. Biesta (2012) argues that uniqueness is found in *when* a person is unique. F and other students describe this experience and its meaningfulness in detail and expand this to an exploration of a person's way of being – *how I am*. The findings indicate that the aim of an interpretative approach to education, a self-understanding, can be achieved through an interpretative exploration of the lived experience of dance. I argue that the findings expand the understanding of when and how self-understanding happens. To be aware of the richness and nature of these experiences is an important perspective when developing, as Biesta (2012, p.589) argues, new

forms of education that 'can operate in the domain of the existential'. It is about to experience *I am*, *when I am*, and *how I am*. These experiences in dance provide a contribution to a renewed perspective on education.

I will conclude this section by presenting a dialogue between statements by student B and quotes from Heidegger's (2010) reflections on the basic ontological fundament of HP. B struggles in the interview to explain why the experience of dance is so important and so strongly connected to her whole life and experience of self. As we saw above, B focuses on the moment of performing the dance where she experiences herself. I will use the same quotes as above and argue that the dialogue with Heidegger's (2010) perspective can make us see new meanings.

Voice of B:

'It is first when I share what I have that it is me, that maybe the most important thing is that between that I show it and that I feel it. There one is somehow free from both oneself and the others.'

Heidegger discusses the basic requirements for exploring *Dasein*.

Heidegger's voice (2010, p.16):

'The manner to access and interpretation must instead be chosen in such a way that this being can show itself to itself on its own terms.'

Voice of B:

'The dance is mine.
Nobody can take my dance from me.
It is only for me.
Until I share it with you,
until I have chosen to show my dance for you,
until I have chosen to show myself to you.'

Heidegger's voice (2010, p.32):

'Hence phenomenology means . . . to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself.'

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

The main objectives of the thesis were to explore students' experience of dance and to develop a method that enhances their ability to verbalise the experience. As discussed in Chapter 6, the findings contribute to knowledge in both these objectives. In addition, a theoretical context to place the findings in will be presented in this chapter; this is the third contribution of the thesis.

The first subsection presents the theoretical context. Gadamer's (1993) views on the importance of the arts intertwined with the perspectives developed from the findings and new approach to *Bildung* is discussed. The following section summarises the contributions the method gave. In next subsection, it is shown how findings expand previous research on dance in education and also how the findings can be placed into the recent discussions on general perspectives on education. Two shorter sections on recommendations for future research and concluding remarks close the thesis.

Theoretical Perspectives on the Arts in the Context of *Bildung*

In this section, I will reflect on theoretical aspects of the research process: what I learned and what I saw important to discuss. I agree with van Manen (1990) that in a phenomenological study, theory can be developed by the end of the research as a way to understand and open up possible contexts to understand findings. In the presentation of findings (see page 189) I included a dialogue between the findings and perspectives developed by Gadamer (1992, 1993, 2001). In the work comparing the voices of the students with Gadamer's ideas, I became aware that this thesis could be seen as a practical implementation of his ideas. My work with understanding the activities that the students describe

made me aware of new perspectives on *Bildung*. In Chapter 3, it was reviewed that artistic activity is at the core of Gadamer's (1993) ontological underpinnings on hermeneutics. However, Gadamer (1993) do not discuss the arts or express an objectified view on the arts; he describes practical situations. In *The Relevance of the Beautiful*, Gadamer (1986) analyses the importance of the arts in life. The activity of play is thoroughly discussed together with the dwelling in and transformation. When reading it, I found that some passages stood out because of their expressive verbal form. In the last sentence of the book Gadamer writes:

‘That “something can be held in our hesitant stay”—this is what art has always been and still is today’ (1986, p.53).

and earlier:

‘in the experience of art we must learn how to dwell upon the work in a specific way. . . . And perhaps it is the only way that is granted to us finite beings to relate to what we call eternity’ (1986, p.45).

These quotes are convincing. In addition, Gadamer (1986) argues that dwelling in the arts is something that can change us. The experience in art makes us ‘go beyond ourselves’ (Gadamer, 1986, p.45). The transformative power of the arts is described in convincing language: ‘There is no place that fails to see you. You must change your life’ (Gadamer, 1986, p.34) and the experience of the arts is ‘a push, to be knocked over’ (Gadamer, 1977, p.43). [My translation of the German original; ‘ein stoss, ein Umgestossen-Werden’]. Gadamer (1986) argues that this helps in proper understanding of why the arts are important. They are important because they make it possible to dwell in an experience, and the experience of being in the art can radically transform us. Analysing the findings of the thesis, I saw that experiences in the activity of dwelling in, play, and transformation are described in a number of ways. They are mirrored in the

three main themes: importance of being in the dance movement, dynamic nature of the experience, and transformation.

The basic claim in Gadamer's view on education as expressed in *Education is Self-Education* is that 'we can learn only through conversation' (2001, p.529).

The fundamental aspect of this conversation is to feel at home, be in oneself:

'This process of feeling at home which I cannot emphasise strongly enough as the key idea of any kind of education' (Gadamer, 2001, p.531).

Feeling at home or the ability to dwell in must first be established. Gadamer (2001) then reflects on how a child learns language. He argues that parents and teachers have only modest roles in this process. The child learns by itself language in a process of trying out and being in conversation with life. He describes what happens in a process of self-education, the transformation, in two ways. One focus on self 'where one perceives one's shortcomings; one strengthen one's own resources' (Gadamer, 2001, p.535). The other focuses on the process of education and considers that it 'has already formed itself in a hidden way' as the important issue (Gadamer, 2001, p.531). So change happens in hidden ways if we stay in conversation with life, and to really see oneself elicits the impulse to change. The most important activities identified in *Education is Self-Education* are the same as Gadamer's (1986) arguments about the importance of the arts. It is important to establish a feeling to 'be home', to be able to dwell-in. This makes possible to move, play, in a conversation with life and develop understanding of self and the world. In this dialogue, it is possible to transform oneself. The ultimate condition for transformative experiences is afforded in the experience. Gadamer places the 'true being of art' into this transformative experience of art:

‘Instead the work of art has its true being in the fact that it becomes an experience that changes the person who experiences it.’ (Gadamer, 1993, p.102).

Gadamer develops similar arguments when he describes what it means to be an un-dogmatic and experienced person. It:

‘does not consist in the fact that someone already knows everything and knows better than anyone else’ (1993, p.355).

But conditions are to be able to rest in oneself, in the experience, thus one should know how to have new experiences and to learn from them. This ‘is made possible by experience itself’ (Gadamer, 1993, p.355). To rest in the experience and how to have new experiences are the vital activities in the conversation with life. The best arena to experience and develop such a way of being is, according to Gadamer (1986), in the experience of the arts. This reading of Gadamer places the experience in the arts at the centre of education. *Truth and Method* (1993) opens with a discussion on *Bildung* and then moves on to a clarification on the ontological fundamental that truth reveals itself in human actions. Then, Gadamer (1993) do not describe the methods of how to explore this truth in details. Instead, a discussion on the humanities follows. However, in between and in later works he clearly points out not the methods but the activities *where* truth can be experienced. To follow his ideas and transform them into practice would lead to an exploration of experiences in the artistic activities in the arts.

My research question, to explore what the students experience when they do the dance movement, aims at this. The method of the thesis, from the first moment, rests on interpretative processes exploring the experience when dancing. This focuses not only on dance but also on the interpretative process

of the experience in the arts. The interpretative activity creates a relation to the experiences in the arts. To dwell in the artistic activity and to interpret it are both important, and to repeatedly interpret it is a way of dwelling in it. If the true being of art, as Gadamer argues, is found in the experience of art that transforms the person who experiences it, then the arts are for the sake of the person who experiences them, and the experience of the person is what constitutes art. However, what is the contribution of dance in this context, and what kind of *Bildung* is articulated in this thesis?

In Chapter 3, the different problems with the concept of *Bildung* were identified. However, authors who see problems with it still see something important in the interpretative activity constituting *Bildung*. Ruin (2011) highlights that Humboldt regarded that the basic activity in *Bildung* is the capacity to translate, to interpret. Segolsson (2011) summarised that Humboldt's perspective on *Bildung* is that humanity can only develop when the self is connected to the world in a variable interplay. The title of a recent Swedish collection of articles analysing the relevance of *Bildung* (Bornemark, 2007) tells the story: 'Det främmande i det egna' [The alien in the own]. The traditional concept of *Bildung* can be seen in this way. To integrate many perspectives of society, culture, and world, 'the other', through a critical interpretative dialogue that informs and changes one's own perspective is fundamental for a person with *Bildung*. I argue that the experiences of dance as described by students in this thesis tell another story. The interpretative process starts with a dance where the student expresses the importance of dance. Then it is made visible in the dance movement. This is the basic position of the arts. They express 'the own' in the alien. This is also a basic idea in Gadamer's (1993) ontology. The concepts used in the context of

Bildung as the origin of the interpretative process such as 'the other' or 'the alien' tries to capture something that is not self. In the findings, when the students express the experience of dance, words relating to self are predominant. The origin of the dance movement is maybe as close to 'the own' as one can come. It is an expression of something intimate done in what one can consider as the totality of 'the own' in the world, one's body (Merleau-Ponty, 1962 [2000]). Dance might then be the art where a person's own way of being is most articulated and thus possible to experience. Perspectives on dance with similar content were reviewed in Chapter 2. The basic claims regarding *Bildung*, that meaning is created as an interpretation of something outside myself are here reversed to an interpretation of something in myself resulting in knowledge on how I am in that situation. Expressed in the traditional hermeneutic language, this is an exploration of my ways of being in the world (van Manen, 1990, 2007). The three stages of the experience of the dance that the young mother described in the pilot study exemplify this process: first, the experience of the dance that originates in the feeling of fulfilling the need of the child, taking care of the child; second, the experience of the strong influence of child on her in that situation, which changes her experience of the child and the dance; third, she experiences herself in a totally new way. The meaningfulness of the dance and the meaningfulness of the new perception of the child resulted in new understandings of herself being in that situation. This shows that dwelling in the arts can move us beyond everyday perspectives. By dwelling in the experience, new transformed experiences of self can be revealed in hidden ways. In this situation, one's way of being in the world is explored, and experiencing oneself in that specific situation opens up an expanded understanding of self. Gadamer's (1993, p.128) claim that 'the truth of our own world' is presented

before us in a ritual or a drama 'in which we recognize ourselves' is also relevant in this context. However, focus is changed. The presentation, the drama, is in our own artistic activity.

The findings of the thesis indicate that a complementary view of *Bildung* can be found when changing the perspective from a world-related interpretative process to an interpretative process resting on the experience of dance. The process of *Bildung* is sometimes described as a life journey into the unknown. On this journey, the encounter with the world expands one's horizons and makes one to truly become what one can be. This view of becoming rests on the necessity 'to leave one's home ground behind' (Pio, 2010, p.97). However, this does not give the full picture. What the findings of the thesis indicate is the importance of to find the way back home, to be able to dwell-in the situation, to *be*. *Bildung* seen as a journey towards *becoming* must be supplemented by the image of finding oneself dwelling in the experience of *being*. To experience oneself in the world or to experience the world in oneself is the abstract wording of these two positions.

An education resting on *self-understanding in interpretation in artistic practice* is a way to find back to oneself and thus it is opposite to an instrumental world of knowledge. I argue that both perspectives on *Bildung*—self-understanding in encounter with the world and 'the other' and self-understanding in encounter with one's own actions, 'the own'—are needed. This creates a dialogue where the student can explore both the world and one's uniqueness. To give opportunity for this dialogue to happen must, in my opinion, be a major aim of education today. This perspective on *Bildung* makes it possible to place the

interpretative activity in dance, as discussed in this thesis, into a theoretical context that acknowledges its educational value.

The Method's Contribution to Knowledge

As discussed in Chapter 2, the focus of the discussion in the research on the arts in education has moved from exploring transfer effects towards an exploration of the impact of the arts themselves—Art for Art's sake. Questions on how the arts contribute to the exploration of personal meaning making, habits of mind, and good life are new research topics (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). New research using new methods is necessary. Phenomenological research done *in* the experience of doing art is argued to be an important task for future research (Caterall, 2009; Theorell in SFI, 2005). In a discussion about the future of ABR, Baldacciono (2009) identifies that it is important to free ABR from situations where the arts are used to explore other issues. He argues that the next step in the development of ABR would be to use the arts to explore the arts themselves. So, from a methodological perspective as well as from an educational perspective, a call is made for new research with new methods exploring the experience of the arts to emerge. The method used in the thesis answers this call. It explores the lived experience *in* dancing using different artistic activities as part of an interpretative process. As discussed in Chapter 2, the difficulty to verbalise experiences is reported as a major problem when developing arguments for the importance of the arts in education and especially for dance. The findings show that the method enhances students' ability to express their experience of dance in verbalised form. The number of statements as well as the quality of the statements indicates this. In the evaluation of the method, the students argue that the method made the

experience much clearer and gave a deepened understanding of it. They highlight the importance of the different artistic activities because those activities make the experience stronger. The method helps them to explore self and motives for doing dance and understanding why dance is important today. The descriptions of what they experience in the activity of creating the artworks and interpreting them as summarised in the themes in Chapter 5 are rich and detailed. The evaluation of the method as well as the findings substantiates that the artistic activities as well as the interpretation of the artwork enhances the ability to explore and express the meaningfulness of the experience *in* dance. Therefore, it is suggested that this method, *phenomenology of artistic practice*, was successful. It provides an answer to the question of how to explore lived experiences in dance. The method contributes to the exploration of art for art's sake, the new direction in the arts and education.

The merging of ABR and HP as practiced in *phenomenology of artistic practice* expands the methodological context of both. The method expands ABR by: first, it explores one art using the experience of activities in other arts; second, the interpretations of the experience are done in a dialogical way moving between interpretations and comparisons of the own artwork. It establishes a 'third space' in the student's experience where new meanings are created. The method expands HP by successfully including the activity of creating artwork into the interpretative process. The artistic activity and their interpretations are moments of interruption, practical forms of questions that open new horizons of understanding. Communicative interactions organised by the students themselves create a context of experiences in which it is possible to experience oneself. Focus is on understanding relations between experiences in oneself.

The method is a new approach to reach the aim of HP, to understand oneself. The *phenomenology of artistic practice* contributes to the development of both ABR and HP.

In the evaluation of the method, the students stress that the interview enhances their ability to understand and express why dance is important for them and the society. The findings substantiate that the method helps them to explore themselves. It makes an *existential self-understanding* possible. In the findings, detailed examples of how self-understanding happens are provided. As discussed in Chapter 6, two perspectives are here merged: the need to understand why one dances and understanding that the students are in an age where identity is formed. This is an unstable period of life but important for future life. A main issue at this age is to understand oneself and identify a future life course. Marcia (1980) argues that the aim of this period of life is identity achievement, to be able to make decisions crucial for the individual's future. According to Marcia (1980, p.159), such decisions rely on the possibility to 'pattern more or less disparate parts into a flexible unit'. Constructing a self-structure is the task. In one group discussion, student A points out the importance of having the opportunity to explore the students own understanding of why they dance and to develop informed judgements and clear arguments to why dance is important in school and society. Student A claims, and the evaluation of the method shows that other students agree, that the interview was helpful and that students should be able to deepen their understanding of themselves and dance in this way on a regular basis. The method meets the needs of these 18-year-old students: first, they are all in the phase of identity achievement; second, they experience that they have to fight for dance because

the value of it is not fully understood in society. They need to explore, understand, and develop informed judgements on the importance of dance for themselves and the society. How the method clearly helps the students explore these situations shows that the method can be used for educational purposes in this age. Biesta (2012) searches for alternatives in education that can operate in the realm of the existential. To develop self-understanding is seen as a major task for recent education (Kemp, 2011). The *phenomenology of artistic practice* can be used for educational purposes and contribute to this search for new ways of education. It affords an exploration of self, a self-understanding based on a particular activity. The example from the pilot study indicates that the method is not restricted to explore self-understanding in dance or late adolescence but that it could be used to explore other activities at different ages. However, I argue that to use it on younger children would need to reconsider the design. So, resting on the evaluation of the method done by students and on the findings, I argue that the method could successfully be used for educational purposes. The *phenomenology of artistic practice* contributes to the development of new forms of education that can operate in an existential realm.

A problem reported by Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) states that when students express verbalised meanings of their experience of dance, it is often done in few words. This makes it difficult to understand the processes behind the experience or the meanings hidden in a statement. The interpretations done through the artworks and the activities in the method makes it possible for the students to express their experience seen from different perspectives and in different situations. This results in statements that move away from conceptual

answers towards narratives of how and when the experience is experienced. The example *freedom*, discussed in Chapter 6, and other examples reviewed in the thesis show how the method expands the conceptual level of answers and arrive at narratives that capture a broader meaning. I argue that this contribution to knowledge is substantial. The examples reviewed in Chapter 5, with the detailed description of how self-understanding happens provided by students J, F, and N, substantiate that the method can expand pure conceptual levels. The method contributes to knowledge by making it possible to verbalise expressions of the lived experiences of dance that go beyond pure conceptual understanding.

The use of different arts affords possibilities for the students to experience themselves in different ways. Some argue that it is easier to do the picture and that the picture prepares them for the poem. Some starts with the poem. The method opens up a process of interpretation where the different arts play different roles. The process is unique for each student, and findings provide clear evidence that the picture and the poem give specific contributions to the process. The picture expresses feelings and the poem is a more intimate and clear expression of the experience. These contributions are significantly different and expand knowledge in this field of research. The comparative approach of the method and the exploration of one art through other arts give a new stance to explore how the different arts can contribute to ABR. However, this must be researched properly. So, the method contributes to an expanded knowledge on how the picture and poem contributes to the process of interpreting the lived experience of dance. The method can be a valuable tool to explore these issues further.

To do the artworks and to interpret them in the way used in the method can, as argued in Chapter 6, be seen as interruptions of normal life. The moment of interruption is a demanding experience, but it starts a new process and also gives motivation to explore the experience deeper. That this is the case was obvious when analysing how the individual students developed knowledge. The method affords different kinds of interruptions that makes it possible to describe the experience from different perspectives, and, in this process, the student creates a context that makes understanding of the experience richer. Students say that the nature of the experience of dance is dynamic and full of tensions thus the context where the students create their self-understanding often includes contradictory tendencies. To place an experience into the context where the students create art makes it possible for the students to understand themselves in new ways. In Chapter 6, this is discussed from different perspectives. Biesta's (2012) call for a pedagogy that can explore uniqueness and the discussion of the different ways of experiencing self focuses on an understanding of self in an action. Using Biesta's (2012) terminology, the method explores uniqueness because it is based on action, it is interpretative, and it explores self in encounter with the activities of self.

The interpretative approach based on experiences in artistic activities that constitutes the uniqueness of the method is closely related to the perspective on *Bildung* discussed earlier in this chapter. There, I argue that the method is a way to put the new perspective on *Bildung* into practice. Gadamer (1993) argues that the ontological underpinning of HP, how truth reveals itself, is best shown in artistic practice. To explore this truth that happen in the moment of interpretation needs a method that focus on this moment of artistic activity, and

this method, *phenomenology of artistic practice*, does this. It is a way of creating knowledge about self and ways of being in the world. The close connection between the theoretical background of the method and the practical process of research makes the new discussion on *Bildung* possible. I argue that the method contributes to an expanded knowledge on Gadamer's (2001) idea that education is self-education in conversation with life. The method in itself is a process of self-education in conversation with life. The method contributes to a new understanding of *Bildung*.

The Findings' Contribution to Knowledge

The objective of the thesis has been to explore why students experience dance as important and how dance is important in their lives. What has been explored is their experience of expressing why dance is important through dance, picture, and poem. This places the findings into this specific context thus the findings do not express any general view on dance in education. In Chapter 5, the findings, summarised into themes, are presented, and these themes highlights the importance of *being in* the dance that elicit experiences of self, freedom, security, well-being, happiness, and hope. The students' experience in developing their personality and motivation through dance and the experience of dance in relation to strong feelings that are built upon dynamic opposites are the other main themes. The review of previous research in this field, done in Chapter 2, shows that research on dance in an educational context is rare. Qualitative research on dance in education is even more rare (Bagley and Castro-Salazar, 2012). However, existing research on experiences of dance show that dance explores how to find, learn to know, and change oneself. The findings of the thesis confirm this. Due to the method, expanded and detailed

descriptions of these previously identified themes are found to such an extent that I defined the process that the students experience in the interview as *existential self-understanding in interpretation in activities in the arts*. The findings thus strongly confirm earlier research that students in dance mainly explore self, and experience personal transformation. The thesis contributes to knowledge by providing expanded and detailed descriptions of how self-understanding is developed in the experience of dance.

The findings show that the experiences of dance are evaluated as very positive. Positive statements are often given in the context of struggling with negative experiences such as stress, high demands, and sleeplessness. The list of conflicting cases on page 194 and the summary of statements on pages 219-220 substantiate that those positive experiences dominate. Examples are to feel secure, free, well, and complete. Examples on the importance of the experience in life are: get a wider understanding of life, find ones way, be able to handle situations, solve problems, have motivation, and feel secure in life. These examples convincingly show a positive and active relation to life. Bond and Stinson (2000/2001) also highlight this theme. The findings in the thesis contribute to knowledge by showing a range of different experiences that students evaluated as positive. In the educational context today, the problem with low self-esteem and low motivation for doing schoolwork is a major problem. Schraml (2013) argues that these problems are serious and actions against them must be taken. The findings of the thesis substantiate that major components of positive self-esteem is enhanced through the experience of dance. Detailed descriptions on how dance helps overcome stress and have a positive control over oneself are given. Examples include the experiences of

student J and F in Chapter 5. The movement between inner freedom of intention and control of the movement is, as students identify, the origin of feeling at home, freedom, and security. I argue that the findings give examples of how the general aim of the arts that Koopman (2005), Varkøy (2012), and Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) define as the 'good life', are achieved through dance. This indicates that the interpretative approach to dance the thesis takes is an activity that can meet the problems identified by Schraml (2013). Drawing on previous research on stress in school and findings of the thesis, I want to point out that dance in an interpretative context is an important educational activity to help overcome stress and loss of control in life. The thesis' contribution to knowledge in this area is not only a strong evidence of the importance of dance in education but it also provides detailed descriptions on how the students can overcome stress. Schraml (2013) argues that responsible persons must take actions against the growing mental problems in adolescence. Drawing on the findings in the thesis and earlier research, I argue that responsible persons should reconsider the value of dance in school and find ways to provide the possibility for all children and students to explore self in the way dance makes it possible.

The discussion on positive experiences of dance also includes the theme of personal transformation. The findings substantiate results in earlier research that the students experience personal change. The thesis contributes to knowledge by confirming that personal transformation can be experienced in dance. The thesis adds to previous results by discussing how and when changes happen.

The positive qualities to self and life discussed here are of high importance from the perspective of the challenges that individuals are confronted with today. Analysing contemporary society, Wiercinski (2012) argues that we live in a time when conflicting existential views both collide and coexist. Demands to arrive on informed judgements on personal views and ways of living are strong (Kemp, 2011). Technological and commodity aspects that dominate life today influence the personal situation and make it unstable and dominated by fear (Bauman, 2006). Bauman (2006, p.176) identified two experiences that are needed to overcome fear: *freedom and security*. The basic finding of the thesis is that the students experience that they have a secure home in dance. In this, they feel free and find themselves. These experiences originate in the experience of the own dance. In my poetic interpretation of the experience of dance, this is the main theme (see pages 155-156). I argue that this is important. Security or freedom cannot be experienced withdrawn from the world; it is experienced *in* the world. In the theoretical conclusion above, I argue that the thesis opens a new perspective on *Bildung*. This perspective focus on *how* we are in the world. Perspectives on the recent situation for the individual, as reviewed by Bauman (2006, 2011) and Kemp (2011), call for an activity where individuals can create security and control *in* life. The findings clearly show how an experience of existential security is developed in students through dance and that this makes them feel free in life. I thus argue that with the high demands put on the individual in society today, an interpretative approach to dance as developed in the thesis should be considered as an important activity in education. The findings of the thesis helps in understanding how can dance make it possible to develop the experience of individual security and freedom in life, abilities strongly needed today in the society.

The findings show that dance helps the students develop motivation, concentration, and endurance. They claim that dance strengthens their motivation to fight for other things in life. As discussed in Chapter 6, to develop motivation in life is an important part of education and research on the arts in education has shown that artistic activity strengthens motivation. This seems to be most articulated in studies on dance. The findings give substantial evidence that dance develops motivation and concentration. The thesis provides a confirmation of earlier research in this area as a contribution to knowledge, and, in addition, it provides detailed descriptions on how concentration and motivation are developed.

New aspects on the relevance of the experiences of dance are pointed out by placing the findings in recent educational contexts. In Chapter 6, Biesta's (2012) analysis of basic questions in education is discussed in relation to the educational value of the findings. Biesta (2012) claims that our relationship to the world is an existential relationship; this makes interpretative knowledge the most important way of understanding, and it moves the focus towards exploring uniqueness in situations. The findings of the thesis can be placed into this educational context. They show individual ways of exploring uniqueness through interpretative knowledge based on experiences of dance. I earlier argued that the thesis is a practical way of exploring the existential perspective of Biesta through experiences in the arts and a wider discussion of the findings can contribute to the search for alternative forms of education where self-understanding is as important as world understanding. From this perspective, the findings of the thesis clearly show that the importance of dance in education has to be revised. The lowest-ranked (Robinson, 2011) subject for attaining

rational, instrumental knowledge must be ranked higher when education includes developing self-understanding and uniqueness as educational aims. The interpretative position of dance that the thesis takes can explore the constituent dynamic energies of the experience of self. The experience of self is a complex interaction of contradictory dynamic feelings, energies, thoughts, and impulses as experienced in one specific moment in life. The thesis shows that an interpretative artistic activity can bring us closer to an understanding of this situation, of our own way of being. The findings of the thesis contribute to knowledge on how an existential approach to education can be practiced in dance. To place dance into this context give new perspectives on the importance of dance in school.

Recommendations for the Future

The findings open up a revised understanding of the importance of an interpretative approach to dance in education. The method is an important factor in this. However, both the findings and the method reveal the complexities of this research and that further research is needed. Two questions that are important to further explore are: What specific contribution does the different arts give in a process of self-understanding? How can the interaction between experiences in different arts contribute to create a wider context of self and to identify important relations between experiences? A study exploring how each student creates understanding of the experience can contribute to a wider understanding of the role of the picture and poem in this process. In the thesis, there is enough material to start such a project. If the order of poem/picture influence the process is of interest to study as well as how the dialogue between the different interpretations influence each other.

Studies using this method but focusing on other arts are needed. This could deepen the understanding of the contribution of the different arts to self-understanding. The findings of the thesis clearly indicate that the contributions of the picture and poem are substantially different.

Using the method and extending the timeframe in a new study would give possibilities to interpret particular features in a picture or a poem. Occasionally, this happened in the interviews, and the comments that the students provided made me aware of the large potential of such statements. It was sometimes obvious that the interpretations the student gave surprised the students themselves. It would also be interesting to analyse and interpret the artwork in direct relation to the verbal descriptions of the experience.

The method can be used in an exploration of other activities as the example from the pilot study indicates. Such a study would extend the context to include meaningful movements outside the arts. Recent studies, as reviewed in Chapter 2, indicate that meaningful movement is an important factor in how consciousness is developed. The method might be able to contribute to this topic.

The findings substantiate that the method is a way to deepen the individual students' experience of self. It provides intimate and new experiences thus a proper, ethical, and tactful way of handling these experiences is needed. The tasks are challenging, and I argue that students in late adolescence have the maturity to do them in ways similar to how it was done in the thesis. With younger pupils, a different way of conducting the interview must be considered.

The findings show convincingly that the experiences in dance have a strong relation to the exploration of self and experiences of security and freedom. However, this must be further explored. I see this as a main argument in a discussion on the importance of dance in education. Further research is needed to validate findings in earlier studies and to deepen knowledge on the basic contribution of dance in education in such a way that it will be taken seriously in a general educational perspective. Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin (2013) conclude that research on the arts in education is a tiny share of research in research on education. In their report, they show that dance is a tiny share of research on the arts in education. To be able to argue for the need to expand research on dance, I see it crucial to develop arguments drawn from recent educational contexts and to work on theoretical perspectives that can place the lived experience of dance in a context where its value is articulated in persuasive language. In earlier chapters, perspectives that claim that alternative views on education have to fight against the strong influence of rational thinking in society today are reviewed. The first aim, as I see it, must thus be to establish a discussion of the importance of dance in the context of the arts in education. The prevailing culturally constructed hierarchy between the arts must be challenged. Phenomenological research on the lived experience of dance is strongly needed for this purpose. There are many themes to explore: how dance contributes to personal transformation and motivation are two essential themes to explore. However, I maintain that research on dance in education would benefit from establishing strong evidence on the importance of dance in being able to feel secure and free and the positive experiences connected to these basic experiences. As existential perspectives on education are

discussed today, there is a possibility to find new approaches to include dance in a general discussion of the purpose of education in the current society.

Concluding Comments

The work with the thesis has widened my horizons on the topic in many ways. Because the method was new, I had few specific expectations on what it would bring. My wider reading opened new perspectives where work moved from the philosophical realm to the practical realities. My reading of Dewey and later of Heidegger and Gadamer fascinated me. Their ideas fascinate me even more now when I have explored some of their ideas in artistic practise. The close relationship between the ontological underpinnings of HP and both the method and the findings of the thesis first surprised me, later gave me confidence to carry on with my work. In the end, it turned out to be at the very core of the thesis. In the introduction, I said that one aim for me was to expand the context where to place experiences of dance in. Now, I see that the findings led me to a context that can encompass both the method as well as the findings and place it in an educational context that I see most relevant in society today.

The method opened my eyes to new possibilities for research in this field. I see it as a first small step into a world of possibilities. I am eager to continue the work, and the first project I want to do is the alternative way of analysing the findings of the thesis, to analyse the process of meaning making of each student. I am now even more convinced than earlier that the arts and dance have an important role to play in future education. I see my thesis as a contribution to a most-needed re-evaluation of the importance of dance in school. The fact that research projects on the experience of dance that are

placed in a broad, educational context are few must be changed. I argue that the findings of the thesis and the context they are placed in give arguments for an inclusion of dance as a regular part of curriculum in schools.

I conclude the thesis with a quote from student B. In a reflection over the value of the interview, B argues that it is important to experience *how* one acts in life, *how* one does things. Concluding the whole process of the interview, B said:

‘It is fun, I become focused as a person doing this.’

Appendices

Appendix 1 A

Letter Seeking Involvement from Schools: Information Sheet and Consent Form

A phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts' worth from the perspective of students.

Participants' Information Sheet

Principal Investigator
Göran Krantz
Kulturcentrum Järna 1
153 91 Järna

This is a research project investigating 18-year-old, 12th-grade pupils' experiences of dance. I am the principal (and only) investigator, and the project is part of my studies for the award of Ph.D. by research at Plymouth University. My research is supervised by Dr. Peter Kelly (director of studies) and Dr. Norman Gabriel at Plymouth University.

Involvement in the project will require individual interviews and one group interview, both of which will be tape-recorded. Individual interviews will be based on arts based research method. This includes dance (video recorded), painting, and poetry. The individual interview will last a maximum of one hour. The group interview will last a maximum of 45 minutes.

I will seek informed consent from participants.

Involvement in the project is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw consent at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. To protect data, I will store data securely, and only my supervisors and I will have access to it. In any reports, papers, and in my thesis, I will keep all references to participants and places anonymous. Additionally, in any papers or publications emanating from this research, pseudonyms will be used to protect

the anonymity of school and participants. All data that I will collect are to be stored securely until I complete my Ph.D. degree and ten years after.

Before the end of this school year, I will invite you to a session where I will give information on the progress of the project to participants.

Any general questions about the research should be directed to me at the above address. Please return the attached slip, but keep this sheet for your information.

Consent Form—Headmasters

A phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts' worth from the perspective of students.

CONSENT FORM

Göran Krantz
Kulturcentrum Järna 1
153 91 Järna

I understand that this is a research project, and involvement in the project is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw at any time or to withdraw unprocessed data previously supplied. I give my consent for undertaking this project at [name of school] after scheduled school time.

Please sign the consent form below and return this page to me.

.....

CONSENT FORM

I,, give my permission for.....to be involved in the research project about a phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate its worth from the perspective of students being undertaken by Göran Krantz. It involves interviews with pupils in the 12th grade to be done after scheduled school time. I understand that I am giving my permission for as a site for this research. I understand that involvement in the project is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw at any time or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix 1B

Participant's Information Sheet and Consent Forms

Participant's Information Sheet

A phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts' worth from the perspective of students.

Principal Investigator
Göran Krantz
Kulturcentrum Järna 1
153 91 Järna

This is a research project investigating 18-year-old, 12th-grade pupils' experiences of dance. I am the principal (and only) investigator and the project is part of my studies for the award of Ph.D. by research at Plymouth University. My research is supervised by Dr. Peter Kelly (director of studies) and Dr. Norman Gabriel at Plymouth University.

Involvement in the project will require an individual interview and a group interview, both of which will be tape-recorded. Individual interviews will be based on arts based research method. This includes artistic activities in dance (video recorded), painting, and poetry. The individual interview will last a maximum of one hour. The group interview will last a maximum of 45 minutes.

Involvement in the project is voluntary, and participants are free to withdraw consent at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.

To protect the confidentiality of data I, will store data securely, and only my supervisors and I will have access to it. In any reports, papers, and in my thesis, I will keep all references to participants and places anonymous. Additionally, in any papers or publications emanating from this research, pseudonyms will be used to protect the anonymity of school and participants. All data that I will collect are to be stored securely until I complete my Ph.D. degree and ten years

after. Before the end of this school year, I will invite you to a session where I will give information on the progress of the project to participants.

Any general questions about the research should be directed to me at the above address. Please return the attached slip, but keep this sheet for your information.

I want to thank you so much for your willingness to participate in this project!

Consent Form—Participants

A phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts' worth from the perspective of students.

CONSENT FORM

Göran Krantz
Kulturcentrum Järna 1
153 91 Järna

I understand that this is a research project. Involvement in the project is voluntary, and participants are free to withdraw at any time or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. I consent to be involved.

Please sign the consent form, and return this page to me.

.....
CONSENT FORM

I, (name) _____, give my permission to be involved in the research project about a phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts' worth from the perspective of students being undertaken by Göran Krantz. I understand that involvement in the project is voluntary, and I am free to withdraw at any time or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. I consent to be involved.

Signed _____

Date _____

Consent Form For Video Recording—Participants

A phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts' worth from the perspective of students.

CONSENT FORM

Göran Krantz
Kulturcentrum Järna 1
153 91 Järna

I, (name) _____, give my permission to be video recorded as part of my participation in the research project about a phenomenological/arts-based study into the lived embodied experience of participating in arts education to evaluate arts worth from the perspective of students being undertaken by Göran Krantz.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix 2

Description of the Dance—Student F

Starting position: standing upright—arms down—head in normal position looking forwards.

Dance movement:

1. Bending the head down to the left looking down. Lifting arms slightly with strong tension in both hands; the fingers are bent inwards.
2. Lifting the arms, the right to the height of the head, the left to the hips showing great tension. The body is twisting and bent forwards down to the left. The tension in the hands and fingers are kept. The face showing great concentration with contracted lips, drawn inwards.
3. The right arm continues the upward movement staying in a posture where the arm is bent at the elbow in the height of the head, and the underarm stretches upwards; the hand turns upwards with bent fingers. The head moves slightly up and down, right and left.
4. When the sequence with the right arm is almost finished, the left arm follows; it moves up above the head and then down behind the back. The head is turned down to the left. Face showing great concentration as earlier.
5. During steps 1–4, F stands on the forward part of both feet and moves them constantly resulting in the constant movement to the right or left. Fingers on both hands are bent inwards but in a constant movement of high tension.
6. Left arm is lifted up to the same height as the right, and then both arms are spread right and left with high tension, hands turned upwards, fingers bent inwards not moving. At the same time, F goes up on the toes, and the movement in the feet stops. The head is turned downwards to the left side

showing strong tension while the direction of the movement is upwards. This posture is held for a very short moment.

7. With a fast and strong movement backwards, the posture is taken away, and a strong exhalation is heard.

Appendix 3 A. Picture—Student J



Appendix 3 B. Picture—Student F



Appendix 3 C. Picture—Student N



References

- Abbs, P. (2003) *Against the flow: education, the arts and postmodern culture*. London and New York: Routledge Falmer.
- AEP-Arts (2014) *The Arts Education Partnership* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.aep-arts.org> (Accessed: 10 March 2014).
- Ajjawi, R. and Higgs, J. (2007) 'Using hermeneutic phenomenology to investigate how experienced practitioners learn to communicate clinical reasoning', *The Qualitative Report*, 12(4), pp. 612–638.
- Albright, A.C. (1997) *Choreographing difference: the body and identity in contemporary dance*. Hanover, London: Wesleyan University Press.
- Arendt, H. (1996) *Vita activa. Det virksomme liv*. Oslo: Pax Forlag.
- Aristotle (1998) *Politics*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Arthur, J. and Croll, P. (2007) 'Editorial: citizenship, democracy and education', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 55(3), pp. 233–234.
- Bagley, C. and Castro-Salazar, R. (2012) 'Dance: making movement meaningful', in Delamont, S. (ed.) *Handbook of qualitative research in education*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Bailey, R., Armour, K., Kirk, D., Jess, M., Pickup, I., Sandford, R. and BERA Physical Education and Sports Pedagogy Special Interest Group (2009) 'The educational benefits claimed for physical education and school sport: an academic review', *Research Papers in Education*, 24(1), pp.1–27.
- Baldacchino, J. (2009) 'Opening the picture: on the political responsibility of arts-based research', *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 10, Review 3 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.ijea.org/v10vr3/> (Accessed: 10 October 2011).
- Barone, T. and Eisner, W.E. (2012) *Arts based research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Bauman, Z. (2006) *Liquid Fear*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Bauman, Z. (2011) *Culture in a liquid modern world*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Beauchamp, T.L. and Childress, J. F. (2001). *Principles of biomedical ethics*. 5th edn. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, G. (2000) 'Towards a new art curriculum: reflections on pot fillers and fire lighters', *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 19(1), pp.10–19.
- Biesta, G.J.J. (2002) 'How general can *Bildung* be? Reflections on the future of a modern educational ideal', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 36(3), pp. 377–390.
- Biesta, G.J.J. (2005) 'How difficult should education be?' *Educational Theory*, 51(4), pp. 385–400.
- Biesta, G.J.J. (2006) *Beyond learning. Democratic education for a human future*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publisher.
- Biesta, G.J.J. (2012) 'Philosophy of education for the public good: five challenges and an agenda', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44(6), pp. 581–593.
- Billet, S. (2001) 'Knowing in practice: re-conceptualising vocational expertise', *Learning and Instruction*, 11(6), pp. 431–452.
- Bond, K.E. and Richard, B. (2005) 'Ladies and gentlemen: what do you see? What do you feel? A story of connected curriculum in a third-grade dance education setting', in Overby, L. and Lepzyk, M. (eds.) *Dance: current selected research*. New York: AMS Press.
- Bond, K.E. and Stinson, S.W. (2000/2001) "'I feel like I'm going to take off":

- young people's experiences of the superordinary in dance', *Dance Research Journal*, 32(2), pp. 52–87.
- Bond, K.E. and Stinson, S.W. (2007) "'It's work, work, work": young people's experiences of effort and engagement in dance', *Research in Dance Education*, 8(2), pp. 155–183.
- Bornemark, J. (2007) Det främmande i det egna [The alien in the own] in Bornemark, J. (ed.) *Södertörns philosophical studies*, 4 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.sh.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:303147/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (Accessed: 6 July 2013).
- Boud, D., Cohen, R. and Walker, D. (1993) 'Understanding learning from experience', in Boud, D. & Walker, D. (eds.) *Using experience for learning*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Bracey, L. (2004) 'Voicing connections: an interpretive study of university dancers' experiences', *Research in Dance Education*, 5(1), pp. 7–24.
- Bradiotti, R. (2013) 'Posthuman Humanities', *European Educational Research Journal*, 12 (1) [Online]. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/eeerj.2013.12.1.1> (Accessed: 5 December 2013).
- Bradley, K. and Wilson, B. (2002) 'Summary: teaching cognitive skill through dance', in Deasy, R.J. (ed.) *Critical links: learning in the arts and student academic and social development*, Arts Education Partnership Washington DC [Online]. Available at: <http://www.aep-arts.org> (Accessed: 23 July 2012).
- Bransford, D.J. and Schwartz, D.L. (1999) 'Rethinking transfer: a simple proposal with multiple implications', *Review of Research in Education*, 24, pp. 61–100.
- Bremberg, S. (2006) *Ungdomar, stress och psykisk ohälsa—Analyser och förslag till åtgärder* [Young people, stress and mental ill-health-Analyses and proposals for action], research report, SOU 2006:77. Stockholm: Fritzes.
- Broady, H.S. (1977) 'Types of knowledge and purposes of education', in Anderson, R.C., Spiro, R.J. & Montague, W.E. (eds.) *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Bråten, S and Trevarthen, C. (2007) *On being moved*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Buckingham, D. and Jones, K. (2001) 'New labour's cultural turn: some tensions in contemporary educational and cultural policy', *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(1), pp.1–14.
- Burnafor, G., Brown, S., Doherty, J. and McLaughlin, H. (2007) *Arts Integration. Frameworks, Research & Practice*, Arts Education Partnership, Washington, DC [Online]. Available at: http://www.aep-arts.org/files/publications/arts_integraton-book_final.pdf (Accessed: 3 April 2012).
- Butler-Kisber, L. (2010) *Qualitative inquiry. Thematic, narrative and arts-informed perspectives*. London: Sage Publications.
- Cancienne, M.B. and Snowber, C.N. (2009) 'Dance and movement', in Leavy, P. (ed.) *Method meets art*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Cann, K. (2003) 'Dance in education', in Raftis, A. (ed.) *Dance in education*. Athens: IOFA.
- Caputo, J.D. (1999) 'Heidegger's revolution: An Introduction to the Introduction

- to Metaphysics', in Risser, J. (ed.) *Heidegger toward the turn: essays on the work of the 1930s*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Caterall, J.S. (2009) *Doing well and doing good by doing art*. Los Angeles: Imagination Group/I-group Books.
- Cixous, H. (1994) *Three steps on the ladder of writing*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Clark, A. (2008) *Supersizing the mind: embodiment, action and cognitive extension*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Clough, P. and Nutbrown, C. (2007) *A students guide to methodology*. London: Sage Publications.
- Coe, D. (2003) "'Dance has connected me to my voice": the value of reflection in establishing effective dance pedagogy', *Waikato Journal of Education*, 9, pp. 39–49.
- Coffey, A. (1999) *The ethnographic self: fieldwork and the representation of identity*. London: Sage Publications.
- Colby, A., Ehrlich, T. and Sullivan, W.M. (2011) *Rethinking undergraduate business education. Liberal learning for the profession*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007) *Qualitative inquiry & research design*, 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Cultural Learning Alliance (2011) *Imagine Nation* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk> (Accessed: 12 November 2012).
- Dahlin, B. (1993) *Didaktik i döda poeters sällskap. Existensfilosofiska perspektiv på didaktik* [Didactics in Dead Poets society. Existencephilosophical perspectives on didactics], Forskningsrapport, 93(4). Karlstad: Högskolan i Karlstad.
- Dale, E.L. (1990) *Kunnskapens tre og kunstens skjønnhet* [The tree of knowledge and the beauty of art]. Oslo: Gyldendal.
- Davey, N. (2012) 'Philosophical hermeneutics: an education for all seasons?', in Fairfield, P. (ed.) *Education, dialogue and hermeneutics*. London: Continuum Books.
- Denzin, N.D. and Lincoln, S.L. (2005) 'Introduction: the discipline and practice of qualitative research', in Denzin, N.D. & Lincoln, S.L. (eds.) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 3rd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N.D. and Lincoln, S.L. (2011) 'Introduction: the discipline and practice of qualitative research', in Denzin, N.D. & Lincoln, S.L. (eds.) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 4th edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Dewey, J. (1934) *Art as experience*. London: Penguin Books, 2005.
- Dewey, J. (1938) *Experience and education*. New York: Touchstone, 1997.
- Dissanayake, E. (2000) *Art and intimacy. How the arts began*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press.
- Dissanayake, E. (2009) 'Bodies swayed to music: the temporal arts as integral to ceremonial ritual', in Malloch, S. & Trevarthen, C. (eds.) *Communicative musicality: exploring the basis of human companionship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Egan, K. (1997) *The educated mind. How cognitive tools shape our understanding*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Eisner, E.W. (1997) 'The promise and perils of alternative forms of data representation', *Educational Researcher*, 26(6), pp. 4–10.

- Eisner, E.W. (2002) *The arts and the creation of mind*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press.
- Engel, L. and Schou Jeppesen, R. (2010) 'The dance of words', *Nordic Journal of Dance*, 1, pp. 59–65.
- Ernst, J.W. (1980) *Die musische kunst* [The art of the muses]. Malsch: Verlag für Art und Kunst.
- Faber, R. and Bonbright, J.M. (2004) 'Synthesis and comparison of content areas: unpublished documents, published literature in dance education, and published literature in other disciplines', in Bonbright, J.M. & Faber, R. (eds.) *Research priorities for dance education: a report to the nation* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.ndeo.org/research> (Accessed: 3 April 2012).
- Fairfield, P. (2012) 'Education, dialogue and hermeneutics', in Fairfield, P. (ed.) *Education, dialogue and hermeneutics*. London: Continuum.
- Finlay, L. (2008) 'A dance between the reduction and reflexivity: explicating the "phenomenological psychological attitude"', *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 39, pp. 1–32.
- Finlay, L. (2012) 'Debating phenomenological research methods', in Friesen, N., Henriksson, C. & Saevi, T. (eds.) *Hermeneutic phenomenology in education*. Rotterdam: Sense Publisher.
- Fraleigh, S. (2000) 'Consciousness Matters', *Dance Research Journal* 32(1), pp.54-62.
- Frichtel, M. (2012) *Freedom, transformation, and community: student meanings of engagement in a dance-based general education course*. PhD thesis. Temple University [Online]. Available at: <http://proquest.com/docview/1019055681> (Accessed: 4 September 2013).
- Friesen, N. and Henriksson, C. (2012) 'Introduction' in Friesen, N., Henriksson, C. & Saevi, T. (eds.) *Hermeneutic phenomenology in education. Method and practice*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Fölster, S., Kreichberg, J. and Sahlén, M. (2011) *Konsten att strula till ett liv* [The art of messing up a life]. Stockholm: Svenskt Näringsliv.
- Gabrielsson, A. (2011) *Strong experiences with music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1977) *Die Aktualität des Schönen* [The relevance of the beautiful]. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1986) *The relevance of the beautiful and other essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1992) *On education, poetry and history: Applied Hermeneutics*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1993) *Truth and method*, 3rd edn. London: Sheed & Ward.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (2001) 'Education is self-education', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35(4), pp. 529–538.
- Gallagher, S. (2005) *How the body shapes the mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gallagher, S. (2011) 'Narrative competence and the massive hermeneutical background', in Fairfield, P. (ed.) *Education, dialogue and hermeneutics*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Garrick, J. (1999) 'The dominant discourses of learning at work', in Boud, D. & Garrick, J. (eds.) *Understanding learning at work*. London: Routledge.
- Green, M. (1995) *Releasing the imagination: essays on education, the arts and social change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Grosz, E. (1994) *Volatile bodies: towards a corporeal feminism*. Bloomington:

- Indiana University Press.
- Gustavsson, B. (2003) 'Bildning och demokrati—att förmedla det partikulära och det universella' [Bildung and democracy—to mediate the particular and the universal], *Utbildning och Demokrati*, 12(1), pp. 39–58.
- Halling, S., Leifer, M. and Rowe, J.O. (2006) 'Emergence of the dialogal approach: forgiving another, in Fischer, C.T. (ed.) *Qualitative research methods for psychology: introduction through empirical studies*. New York: Academic Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1977) *The question concerning technology and other essays*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, M. (2006) *The origin of the work of art*, Academia [Online]. Available at: [https://www.academia.edu/2083177/The Origin of the Work of Art by Martin Heidegger](https://www.academia.edu/2083177/The-Origin-of-the-Work-of-Art-by-Martin-Heidegger) (Accessed: 28 May 2013).
- Heidegger, M. (2010) *Being and time*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Henrekson, M. and Sanandaji, T. (2013) 'Bristande social kompetens skäl för arbetslöshet' [Insufficient social competence a reason for unemployment]. *Dagens Nyheter*, 6 July.
- Henry, R. (2000) 'Introduction-anthropology of dance', *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 11(3), pp. 253–260.
- Herder, J.G. (1966) *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* [Treatise on the origin of language]. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam.
- Herder, J.G. (1989) *Der Mensch is der erste freigelassene der Schöpfung* [The human is the first freedmen in creation]. Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben.
- Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S. and Sheridan, K.M. (2007) *Studio thinking: the real benefits of visual arts education*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.
- Hirsch, E.D. (1967) *Validity in interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hogan, P. (2000) 'Gadamer and the philosophy of education', in Peters, M., Ghirdelli, P., Zarnic, B. & Gibbons A. (eds.) *Encyklopaedia of Educational philosophy and Theory*, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Splitu [Online]. Available at: [http://www.eeapt.net/doku.php?id=gadamer_and the philosophy of education](http://www.eeapt.net/doku.php?id=gadamer_and_the_philosophy_of_education) (Accessed: 28 November 2011).
- Hogan, S. and Pink, S. (2010) 'Routes to interiorities: art therapy and knowing in anthropology', *Visual Anthropology*, 23, pp.158–174.
- Holland, D., Lachicotte, D., Skinner, D. and Cain, C. (1998) *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- hooks, B. (2003) *Teaching community: a pedagogy of hope*. New York: Routledge.
- Houston, S. (2005) 'Participation in community dance: a road to empowerment and transformation?' *New Theatre Quarterly*, 21(2), pp.166–177.
- Huges, M., Desforjes, C., Mitchell, C. and Carre, C. (2000) *Numeracy and beyond*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Hunter, H., Lusardi, P., Zucker, D., Jacelon, C. and Chandler, G. (2002) 'Making meaning: the creative component in qualitative research', *Qualitative Health Research Journal*, 12(3), pp. 388–398.
- Jackson, P.W. (1998) *John Dewey and the lessons of art*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Johnson, M. (2007) *The meaning of the body*. Chicago: The University of

- Chicago Press.
- Jongeward, C. (2009) 'Visual portraits: integrating artistic process into qualitative research', in Leavy, P. (ed.) *Method meets art*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Jonsson, S. (2010) 'The humanities in the face of postcoloniality', in Cederberg, C. & Ruin, H. (eds.) *Another humanities—another time*. Philosophical Studies 7. Södertörn: Södertörns Högskola.
- Kahneman, D. (2011) *Thinking, fast and slow*. London: Penguin Books.
- Kelly, P. (2014) 'Intercultural comparative research: rethinking insider and outsider perspectives', *Oxford Review of Education*, 40(2), pp.1–20.
- Kemp, P. (2011) *Citizen of the world*. New York: Humanity Books.
- Klafki, W. (1999) *Studien zur Bildungstheorie* [Studies on the theory of Bildung]. Weinheim: Julius Beltz.
- Knowles, J.G. and Cole, A.L. (2008) *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Koopman, C. (2005) 'Art as fulfilment: on the justification of education in the arts', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 39(1), pp. 85–97.
- Koshland, L., Wittaker, J. and Wilson, B. (2004) 'Peace through dance/movement: evaluating a violence prevention program', *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 26(2), pp. 69–90.
- Kozulin, A. (2003) 'Psychological tools and mediated learning', in Kozulin, A., Gindis, B., Ageyev, V.S. and Miller S.M. (eds.) *Vygotsky's educational theory in cultural context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kramer, K (2003) 'Dance didactics applied to children', in Raftis, A. (ed.) *Dance in education*. Athens: IOFA.
- Krantz, G. (2002) 'Responses to melodic intervals', *proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition*, Sydney, July 17-21. Sydney: Casual productions, p. 40.
- Krantz, G., Merker, B. and Madison, G. (2003) 'Melodic intervals and body movement', in Raftis, A. (ed.) *Dance in education*. Athens: IOFA.
- Krantz, G. (2007) 'Mental responses to music', in Klockars, M. & Peltoma, M. (eds.) *Music meets medicine*. Helsinki: Acta Gyllenbergiana VII.
- Krantz, G., Ericsson, M., Kreuz, G. and Theorell, T. (2011) 'Bodily movements influence heart rate variability (HRV) responses to isolated melodic intervals', *Music and Medicine*, 3(2), pp. 108–113.
- Kvale, S. (1983) The qualitative research interview: a phenomenological and hermeneutical mode of understanding, *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 14(2), pp. 171–196.
- Kvale, S. (1996) *InterViews: an introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Küpers, V.M. (2011) Embodied pheno-pragma-practice—phenomenological and pragmatic perspectives on creative “inter-practice” in organisations between habits and improvisation, *Phenomenology & Practice*, 5(1), pp. 100–139.
- Lave, J. (2011) *Apprenticeship in critical ethnographic practice*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Laverty, S.M. (2003) 'Hermeneutic phenomenology and phenomenology: a comparison of historical and methodological considerations', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2 (3), pp. 21-35.
- Lazou, A. (2004) 'Ancient Greek dance and its influence on contemporary culture', in Lazou, A., Raftis, A. & Borosska, M. (eds.) *Orchesis*. Athens: Way of Life Publications.

- Leavy, P. (2009) *Method meets art*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Levine, M. (2002) *A mind at a time*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Levinsson, M. (2013) *Evidens och existens. Evidensbaserad undervisning i ljuset av lärares erfarenheter* [Evidence and existence. Evidenced based teaching seen in the light of teachers' experiences]. PhD thesis. Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, Göteborg [Online]. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/32807> (Accessed: 12 January 2014).
- Lindgren, M. (2013) 'Konst för sin egen eller andra ämnens skull?' [Art for its own or others subjects sake], *Pedagogiska Magasinet*, 3(13), pp. 47–51.
- Lindseth, A. and Norberg, A. (2004) 'Phenomenological hermeneutical method for researching lived experience', *Scandinavian Journal for Caring Sciences*, 18(2) pp.145–153.
- Lindström, L. (2012) 'Aesthetic learning about, in, with and through the arts: a curriculum study', *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 31(2), pp.166–179.
- Lussier-Ley, C. (2010) 'Dialoguing with the body: a self study in relational pedagogy through embodiment and the therapeutic relationship', *The Qualitative Report*, 15(1), pp. 197–214.
- Lynn Smith, K. (2003) 'The spiritual foundations of dance', in Raftis, A. (ed.) *Dance in education*. Athens: IOFA.
- Løvlie, L. and Standish, P. (2002) 'Introduction: Bildung and the idea of a liberal education', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 36(3), pp. 317–340.
- Madison, G., Paulin, J. and Aasa, U. (2013) 'Physical and psychological effects from supervised aerobic music exercise', *American Journal of Health and Behaviour*, 37(6), pp. 780–793.
- Malloch, S. and Trevarthen, C. (2009) 'Musicality: Communicating the vitality and interests in life', in Malloch, S. & Trevarthen, C. (eds.) *Communicative musicality: exploring the basis of human companionship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Marcia, J.E. (1980) 'Identity in adolescence', in Adelson, J. (ed.) *Handbook of adolescent psychology*. New York: Wiley & Sons.
- Marcia, J.E. (2010) 'Life transformations and stress in the context of psychosocial development', in Miller, T.W. (ed.) *Handbook of stressful transitions across the lifespan*. New York: Springer.
- Martin, V. (2011) *Developing a narrative approach to healthcare research*. Oxon: Radcliffe Publishing.
- Mascolo, M.F. and Fischer, K.W. (2010) 'The dynamic development of thinking, feeling and acting over the lifespan', in Overton, F. & Lerner, R.M. (eds.) *The handbook of life-span development, Vol. 1: biology, cognition and methods across the life-span*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Masschelein, J. and Ricken, N. (2003) 'Do we (still) need the concept of Bildung?', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 35(2), pp.139–154.
- Mathiasson, L. (2013) 'Nyttan med de sköna konsterna' [The usefulness of the fine arts], *Pedagogiska Magasinet*, 3(13), pp. 56–57.
- Maton, K. (2003) 'Reflexivity, relationism, & research: Pierre Bourdieu and the epistemic conditions of social scientific knowledge', *Space and Culture*, 6 (1), pp. 52–65.
- McNeil, D. (2005) *Gesture and thought*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- McNiff, S. (1998) *Art-based research*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Merker, B. (2009) 'Ritual foundations of human uniqueness', in Malloch, S. & Trevarthen, C. (eds.) *Communicative musicality: exploring the basis of human companionship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962) *Phenomenology of perception*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1964) 'The child's relations with others', in Edie, J.M. (ed.) *The primacy of perception*. Evanston: North Western University Press.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968) *The visible and the invisible*. Evanston: North Western University Press, 1987.
- Miller, D.H.P. (2010) *Finding, revealing, and knowing oneself: the dance makers' experience*. PhD thesis. Mills College. Available at: <http://gradworks.umi.com/14/74/1474967.html> (Accessed: 23 November 2013).
- Moran, D. (2000) *Introduction to phenomenology*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Music Research Institute (2014) *Music education: Swiss investigation* [Online]. Available at: <http://www.mri.ac.uk> (Accessed: 20 January 2014).
- Nicholson, G. (2012) 'The education of the teacher', in Fairfield, P. (ed.) *Education, dialogue and hermeneutics*. London: Continuum Books.
- Noddings, N. (2003) *Happiness and education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nordaker, D.J. (2009) *Dans i skolen?* [Dance in school?]. PhD thesis. Danmarks Pædagogiske Universitetsskole, Aarhus Universitet, København.
- Nussbaum, M.C. (2010) *Not for profit*. Princetown: Princeton University Press.
- Nussbaum, M.C. (2011) *Creating capabilities: the human development approach*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Oscarson, S. (2013) 'Demokratins immunförsvar' [The immune system of democracy], *Pedagogiska Magasinet*, 3, pp. 28–33.
- Parr, J. (2008) 'Working with the arts: a universal right and benefit', *Children in Europe*, 14, pp. 4–5.
- Peukert, H. (2000) 'Reflexionen über die zukunft von Bildung' [Reflections on the future of Bildung], *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 46(4), pp. 507–524.
- Picard, A. and Bailey, R. (2009) 'Crystallising experiences among young elite dancers', *Sport, Education and Society*, 14(2), pp. 165–181.
- Pio, F. (2010) Response to Øvind Varkøy, "The concept of Bildung", *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 18(1), pp. 97–100.
- Ravitch, D. (2010a) *The death and life of the great American school system: how testing and choice are undermining education*. New York: Basic Books.
- Ravitch, D. (2010b) 'Why I changed my mind about school reform', *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 March [Online]. Available at: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB1000142405274870486930457510944330534962.html> (Accessed: 15 May 2010).
- Read, H.S. (1974) *Education through art*, 3rd edn. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Regeringens Proposition, 2009, *Bäst i klassen*, [Best in the class] Prop. 2009/10:89 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/13/93/30/100696be.pdf> (Accessed: 10 October 2011).
- Ricoeur, P. (1998) *Hermeneutics, the human sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rittelmeyer, C. (2012) 'Leibliche erfahrung und lernen: über den Sinn einer allseitigen Sinnesbildung' [Embodied experience and learning: on the meaning of a comprehensive development of the senses], *Schulpädagogik Heute*, 3(6), pp. 1–16.

- Robins, R.W. and Trzesniewski, K.H. (2005) 'Self-esteem development across the lifespan', *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14(3), pp. 158–162.
- Robinson, K. (2009) *The element: how finding your passion changes everything*. London: Penguin Books.
- Robinson, K. (2011) *Out of our minds*, 2nd edn. Chichester: Capstone Publishing.
- Ruin, H. (2006) *Bildning och filosofi* [Bildung and philosophy], report 2006:27 R Stockholm: Högskoleverket.
- Ruin, H. (2011) 'Att översätta sig in i det främmande—om ett samtida Bildningsbegrepp' [To translate oneself into the alien-on a contemporary concept of Bildung], in Lindh, M., Sundeen, J. & Torhell, T. (eds.) *Från Högskolan i Borås till Humboldt: bildning och kunskapskulturer, vetenskap för profession, rapport nr 16*. Borås: Borås Högskola.
- Ruppert, S., Sikes, M. and Smyth, L. (2010) *Doing well and doing good by doing art*, Arts Education Partnership [Online]. Available at: <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp.../03/NAEPAnalysis1.pdf> (Accessed: 2 February 2011).
- Rustad, H. (2012) 'Dance in physical education: experiences in dance as described by physical education student teachers', *Nordic Journal of Dance*, 3, pp.15–29.
- Sá Cavalcante Schuback, M. (2010) 'On the use of uselessness of humanities for life—another humanities—another time', in Cederberg, C. & Ruin, H. (eds.) *Another humanities—another time*. Södertörn: Södertörns Högskola.
- Sampson, H. (2004) 'Navigating the waves: the usefulness of a pilot in qualitative research', *Qualitative Research*, 4, pp. 383–402.
- Sanderson, P. (2008) 'The arts, social inclusion and social class: the case of Dance', *British Educational Research Journal*, 34(4), pp. 467–490.
- Saumure, K. and Given, L.M. (2008) 'Rigor. Trustworthiness', in Given, L.M. (ed.) *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative inquiry*, 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Sava, I. and Nuutinen, K. (2003) 'At the meeting place of word and picture: between art and inquiry', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), pp. 515–534.
- Schraml, K. (2013) *Chronic stress among adolescents*. PhD thesis. DiVA Portal [Online]. Available at: <http://su.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:614880/FULLTEXT01> (Accessed: 2 June 2013).
- Schultz, E. (2012) *Bildung*, UTB Wörterbuch Erwachsenenbildung [Online]. Available at: <http://www.wb-erwachsenenbildung.de/online-woerterbuch/> (Accessed: 30 April 2012).
- Schwarz, D.L., Bransford, J.D. and Sears, D. (2004) 'Efficiency and innovation in transfer', in Mestre, J. (ed.) *Transfer of learning: research and perspectives*. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing.
- Scruton, R. (2007) *Culture counts*. New York: Encounter Books.
- Segolsson, M. (2011) *Lärandets hermenutik* [The hermeneutics of learning]. PhD thesis. DiVA Portal [Online]. Available at: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:393405/FULLTEXT01.pdf> (Accessed: 13 October 2013).
- Sennet, R. (2009) *The craftsman*. London: Penguin Books.
- Serig, D. (2010) 'Research review "doing well and doing good by doing art"', *Teaching Artist Journal*, 8(2), pp.113–121.

- SFI, Statens Folkhälsoinstitut [Swedish National Public Health Institute] (2005) *Kultur för hälsa* [Art for health], report 2005:23 [Online]. Available at: <http://www.fhi.se/Publikationer/Alla-publikationer/Kultur-for-halsa> (Accessed: 10 October 2011).
- Sheets-Johnstone, M. (1999) *The primacy of movement*. Amsterdam: Walter Benjamins.
- Shilling, C. (2008) *Changing bodies: habit, crisis and creativity*. London: Sage Publications.
- Shusterman, R. (2008) *Body consciousness: a philosophy of mindfulness and somaesthetics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sinner, A., Leggo, C., Irwin, R.L., Gouzouasis, P. and Grauer, K. (2006) 'Arts-based education research dissertations: reviewing the practices of new scholars', *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29(4), pp. 1223–1270.
- Sjöholm, C. (2010) 'What are we fighting for? Humanities and the legacy of exclusion', in Cederberg, C. & Ruin, H. (eds.) *Another humanities—another time*. Södertörn: Södertörns Högskola.
- Skolverket, (2010) *Attityder till skolan 2009. Elevernas och lärarnas attityder till skolan* [Attitudes towards school 2009. Pupils' and teachers' attitudes towards school], research report [Online]. Available at: <http://www.skolverket.se/publikationer?id=2282> (Accessed: 17 July 2013).
- Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2008) 'Interpretative phenomenological analysis', in Smith, J.A. (ed.) *Qualitative psychology: a practical guide to research methods*. London and Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Steiner, R. (1984) *Eurythmy as visible speech*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press.
- Steiner, R. (1996) *Eurythmy as visible singing*. Stourbridge: The Anderida Music Trust.
- Stern, D.N. (2010) *Forms of vitality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stinson, D.A., Logel, C., Zanna, M.P., Holmes, J.G., Cameron, J., Wood, J.V. and Spencer, S.J. (2008) 'The cost of lower self-esteem: testing a self- and social-bonds model of health', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94(3), pp. 412–428.
- Stinson, S.W. (1998) 'Seeking a feminist pedagogy for children's dance', in Saphiro, S. (ed.) *Dance, power and difference: critical and feminist perspectives in dance education*. Champaign: Human Kinetics.
- Stinson, S.W. (2004) 'My body/myself: lessons from dance education', in Bresler, L. (ed.) *Knowing bodies, moving minds: towards embodied teaching and learning*. London: Kluwer Academic.
- Sullivan, G. (2005) *Art practice as research: inquiry in the visual arts*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Svendler Nielsen, C. (2009) 'Children's embodied voices: approaching children's experience through multi-modal interviewing', *Phenomenology and Practice*, 3(1), pp. 80–93.
- Tatarkiewicz, W. (1979) *Geschichte der ästhetik. Erster Band*. [The history of aesthetics. Volume one]. Basel/Stuttgart: Schwabe & Co Ag Verlag.
- Taylor, C. (1993) *Engaged agency and background to Heidegger*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tenni, C., Smyth, A. and Boucher, C. (2003) 'The researcher as autobiographer: analysing data written about oneself', *Qualitative Report*, 8(1), pp. 1–12.
- Thomson, I. (2005) *Heidegger on ontheology: technology and the politics of education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Uljen, M. (2002) 'The idea of a universal theory of education—an impossible but necessary project?', *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 36(3), pp. 353–375.
- Wahlqvist, E. (2009) *Making art work: concerning arts graduates' life choices and career Paths: the Creative Arts Academy contribution to regional development*. Göteborgs Universitet: Kulturvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborg.
- van Manen, M. (1990) *Researching lived experience: human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- van Manen, M. (2007) 'Phenomenology of practice', *Phenomenology & Practice*, 1(1), pp.11–30.
- Varkøy, Ø. (2012) ' . . . nytt liv av daude gror' [...new life out of death grows], in Varkøy, Ø. (ed.) *Om nytte og onytte*. Oslo: Abstrakt Forlag AS.
- Wellmer, A. (1986) *Dialektiken mellan det moderna och det postmoderna* [The dialectics between the modern and the postmodern]. Stockholm: Symposion.
- Wertz, F. (2005) 'Phenomenological research methods for counselling psychology', *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 52(2), pp.167–177.
- Wiercinski, A. (2012) 'Hermeneutic education to understanding: self-education and the willingness to risk failure', in Fairfield, P. (ed.) *Education, dialogue and hermeneutics*. London: Continuum.
- Wimmer, M. (2003) 'Ruins of Bildung in a knowledge society: commenting on the debate about the future of Bildung', *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 35(2), pp.167–187.
- Winner, E. and Cooper, M. (2000) 'Mute those claims: no evidence (yet) for a causal link between arts study and academic achievement', *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 34(3–4), pp.11–75.
- Winner, E., Goldstein, T.R. and Vincent-Lancrin, S. (2013) *Art for art's sake? The impact of arts education*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Winner, E. and Hetland, L. (2002) 'Teaching Cognitive Skill Through Dance: Evidence for Near but Not Far Transfer', in Deasy, R.J. (ed.) *Critical links: learning in the arts and student academic and social development*, Arts Education Partnership, Washington DC [Online]. Available at: <http://www.aep-arts.org/> (Accessed: 2 February 2011).
- Wolfe, C. (2010) *What is posthumanism?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1986) *Thought and language*. Cambridge: IT Press.
- Yin, R.K. (2003) *Case study research: design and method*, 3rd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.